

# **THE TOURISM IMAGE OF BLOEMFONTEIN AS PERCEIVED BY TOUR OPERATORS IN CERTAIN METROPOLITAN AREAS OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**RENÉ GERBER NEL**

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RENÉ GERBER NEL

Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree

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at the  
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Supervisor: Dr Albertus J Strydom, Ph.D. (Economics)

BLOEMFONTEIN  
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## DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENT WORK

### DECLARATION WITH REGARD TO INDEPENDENT WORK

I, RENÉ GERBER NEL, identity number [REDACTED] and student number [REDACTED] do hereby declare that this research project submitted to the Technikon Free State for the Degree MAGISTER TECHNOLOGIAE: MARKETING, is my own independent work; and complies with the Code of Academic Integrity, as well as other relevant policies, procedures, rules and regulations of the Technikon Free State; and has not been submitted before to any institution by myself or any other person in fulfilment (or partial fulfilment) of the requirements for the attainment of any qualification.



SIGNATURE OF STUDENT

21/10/03

DATE

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## OPSOMMING

Wanneer toeriste verskillende vakansiebestemmings oorweeg, steun die toeris swaar op die beeld wat 'n spesifieke bestemming het. Noudat daar meer keuses en 'n groter variasie van bestemmings bestaan om uit te kies, is toeriste meer geneig om vakansies te kies wat die bevrediging en verpersoonliking is van hul persoonlike behoeftes en steeds waarde vir geld bied. Om 'n goeie produk te hê in 'n kompeterende mark is nie meer goed genoeg nie, daarom moet die motiverings, verwagtings en behoeftes van die toeriste in aanmerking geneem word. As ontspanning, selfontdekking en wegbreek die werklike redes is waarom 'n vakansie geneem word, dan is die aanvanklike redes waarskynlik die prestige en status daarvan. Vakansies het 'n verbruikbare item geword wat 'n voorvereiste is van die hedendaagse moderne leefstyl en het in die proses 'n indikator van status geword. Weens hierdie rede is die beeld van 'n bestemming 'n kritiese faktor wanneer 'n vakansiebestemming gekies word. Of die beeld inderdaad 'n ware weergawe is van wat die bestemming die toeris kan bied of nie, is van sekondêre belang. Wat van belang is, is die beeld wat in die gedagtes van die verbruiker bestaan.

Dit is dus van uiterste belang dat die toerismebemarker die produk (bestemming) korrek posisioneer in die gedagtes van die verbruiker. Posisionering is meer as net beeldskepping - dit sal ook die bestemming 'n kompeterende voordeel gee en om effektief te wees, moet die gekose posisie geloofwaardig wees vir die verbruiker en dit moet ook, dit wat belowe word, op 'n konstante basis lewer. Ten einde 'n bestemming se beeld te verstrek of verander, moet bemarkingsveldtogte genoeg gewig dra en moet die impak

daarvan ondersteun word deur 'n genoegsame begroting, gemik op die toepaslike marksegment(e).

Die studie het getoon dat:

- Die beeld van 'n bestemming 'n belangrike rol speel in die besluitnemingsproses van die toeris.
- Toeroperateurs die toerismebedryf deur die samestelling van toere en pakkette na verskillende bestemmings stimuleer in 'n poging om die behoeftes van die toeris of 'n spesifieke marksegment te bevredig.
- Daar 'n gebrek is aan kennis omtrent Bloemfontein by toeroperateurs en hulle is oningelig omtrent wat Bloemfontein het om die toeris te bied.
- Bemerkingsaksies om Bloemfontein as 'n stad te bemark nie die oorgrote meerderheid van die binnelandse toeroperateurs in Suid-Afrika bereik het nie.
- Toeroperateurs Bloemfontein as 'n geskikte oorskop bestemming beskou, maar nie geskik as 'n vakansiebestemming nie.
- Bloemfontein beskou word as 'n bestemming wat goeie waarde vir geld, persoonlike veiligheid en geskikte en bekostigbare akkommodasie bied.



- Die persepsie van Bloemfontein onder toeroperateurs is dat die stad tekortkominge het in terme van 'n mooi omgewing en aangename weersomstandighede.

Sleutelwoorde: Beeld, persepsie, bestemming, Bloemfontein, toeroperateurs, verbruikersbesluite, motivering, reis, toerisme en bemarking.

## SUMMARY

When considering various holiday destinations, tourists rely heavily upon the image of a particular destination. Given a much wider choice and greater variety of destinations, tourists today are likely to favour holidays that offer the fullest realisation of their personal needs and value for money. Having a good product alone is simply not good enough in a competitive market, therefore the motives, expectations and needs of tourists must be taken into consideration. If the real reason for taking a holiday is to relax, unwind and rediscover yourself, then the apparent reasons for taking a holiday may be concerned with prestige and status. A holiday has become a major consumable as a prerequisite for modern living and has in the process become a marker of status. This is the reason why the image of a holiday destination is a critical factor when choosing a destination. Whether or not the image is in fact a true representation of what the destination has to offer the tourist or not, is of secondary importance. What is important is the image that exists in the mind of the consumer.

It is therefore of utmost importance that the tourism marketer correctly positions the product (destination) in the minds of the consumer. Positioning is more than just image creation- it may also provide the competitive edge and to be effective, the position must be believable in the consumer's mind and it must deliver that promise on a constant basis. In order to change or enhance a destination's image, marketing campaigns must be of sufficient weight and

impact and should be supported by an adequate budget aimed at the applicable market segment(s).

The study indicated that:

- The image of a destination plays an important role in the decision-making process of the tourist.
- Tour operators stimulate the tourism industry by putting together tours and packages to different destinations to satisfy the needs of the tourist or a specific market segment.
- There is a lack of knowledge amongst tour operators and they are very uninformed about what Bloemfontein has to offer the tourist.
- Marketing efforts to promote the city of Bloemfontein has not reached the majority of domestic tour operators in South Africa.
- Tour operators perceive Bloemfontein to be a suitable stop-over destination, but not a holiday destination.
- Bloemfontein is regarded as a destination that offers good value for money, personal safety with suitable and affordable accommodation.



- The perception of Bloemfontein amongst tour operators is that the city lacks beautiful scenery and a good climate.

Key words: Destination, image, perception, Bloemfontein, tour operators, consumer decisions, motivation, travel, tourism and marketing.

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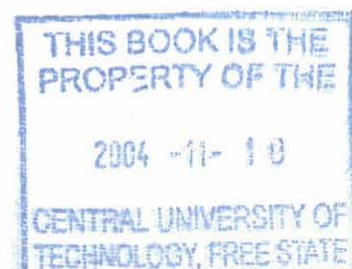
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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

### 1.1. INTRODUCTION

Travel and tourism is the vast complex network of business, which involves accommodating, transporting, nourishing and entertaining of tourists. This can include activities and travel carried out for leisure, family or business reasons and usually has the following purposes: rest, entertainment, conducting business and / or personal development (Elliott, 1997:4).

The number of tourist destinations in the world has increased markedly and the range of tourist activities has broadened, giving rise to many different types of tourists and choices. According to the World Tourism Organisation (WTO, 2001), almost 715 million international tourist arrivals were registered in 2002. It also reports that Sub-Saharan Africa performed way above average, with an 8.5 per cent increase for 2002 (Business Trust SA, 2003 or WTO, 2003). In 1950, only 25 million international tourist arrivals were reported (Elliott, 1997:4).

The attitudes and images customers have towards products or destinations strongly influence their buying decisions (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999:868). Destination images are not necessarily grounded in experience or facts, but

are powerful motivators in travel and tourism (Middleton, 1994:87 and Kim, 1998:340-342). Destinations mainly compete on their perceived images related to that of their competitors in the marketplace (Baloglu & Mangalolu, 2001:1).

The image which a person has of any product or service is highly subjective and it is therefore not easy quantifiable. Images are in the minds of the beholders. The limited and complex side of a perception or image of a product or service is that each individual can strongly believe in it, yet it can be wrong.

Marketing communications, or the absence thereof, convey a message and information to the consumers on which they can form an intention to purchase a service or product. Information available to tourists is critical in their decisions (Laws, 1991:64).

Travel is motivated by different reasons for different types of tourists and their holiday activities. As different destinations offer different packages of attractions and/or activities, or potential 'benefits' to holidaying tourists, it can be assumed that the market for holiday areas will naturally be segmented (Johnson & Thomas, 1992:77).

The traditional view of consumer behaviour has been that people make decisions, having gathered and evaluated all the available information about the relative costs and characteristics of the product or service. The better the information on which a decision was based, the more likely it is that the features of the product or service will prove acceptable to the client (Laws, 1991:61).

Through the media and through hearsay, most people have already decided whether they are attracted or repelled by the image of a destination (Kim, 1998:340). All destinations have images, often based more on historic rather than current events, and it is an essential objective of destination marketing to sustain, alter or develop images in order to influence prospective customers' expectations.

Against the above-mentioned background, the main purpose of this study is to determine the current image of Bloemfontein as a tourist destination as perceived by tour operators in the major metropolitan areas (Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban). If necessary, attempts will be made to improve the current image in order to attract more tourists to the city and surroundings.

## 1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

When a tourist considers alternative destinations, they rely, upon others, heavily on the **image** of that particular destination. If the image of a destination coincides with the tourists' preferences and expectations, the destination will be given a favourable rating. An individual's perception of a holiday destination is conditioned by the information available at the time of decision-making. Given a much wider choice and greater variety of destinations, tourists are likely to favour holidays that offer both the fullest realisation of their personal needs and value for money (Ashworth & Goodall, 1993:6-9). Having a good product (in this study the product is the tourist destination) is not enough in a competitive market (Dahles, 1998:65). Motives



and expectations of tourists must be researched in order to establish why tourists regard specific destinations with specific images.

To determine the **perception or image** of a destination in the minds of the consumers is a difficult task. Even more difficult is to establish **why** a specific image or perception exists, as this can be very subjective.

Without a clear understanding of product image and product appeal to potential consumers, the tourist destination and tourism industry is at a disadvantage in an increasingly competitive market. Therefore, research that focuses on the image evaluation of tourism products by potential visitors or the manufacturer of a tourist product (tour operators), **leads to greater marketing effectiveness and is vital to industry success** (Johnson & Thomas, 1993:93). Marketing a destination implies that places are multi-sold. The same destination can be sold as a historical destination, a shopping destination or for instance a sporting destination to the same or different customers (Ashworth & Goodall, 1993:6-9).

If it is necessary to influence a decision or make a change in behaviour, it is important to know **how** that decision is made. There must be an increasing focus in the research and planning in the travel and tourism industry on how decisions are made. The terrain is in the buyer's mind (perception and image); not in just who he or she is (Davidson, 1985:106).

Bloemfontein is a city in its development phase, which has seen a few major developments in the past five years, such as the Mimosa Mall shopping

complex, a luxurious hotel and the Waterfront family entertainment centre. In the near future, a new casino, another up-market shopping mall and a chain hotel will be some of the latest developments in the city. It is therefore important to establish the image of the city, and if this image will indeed compliment the new developments, as untested perceptions exist that Bloemfontein is old fashioned.

The study is aimed at determining the image or perception that exist about Bloemfontein and to establish whether or not marketing efforts to promote the city has reached the tour operator's industry.

### 1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

The primary objective of this study is:

- To determine the current **tourism image** of Bloemfontein as a tourist destination as perceived by identified tour operators in the major metropolitan areas of South Africa<sup>1</sup>.

The secondary objectives are as follows:

- To undertake a literature study on tourism, types of tourists, the working environment of tour operators and attractions.

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<sup>1</sup> See Annexure B for full details on the most important places of interest in Bloemfontein.

- To understand consumer behaviour- i.e. the motivation to travel and decision making units.
- To analyse the tourism product and image or perception as part of the product and the influence that marketing can have on a destination's image.
- To make recommendations towards the future marketing of Bloemfontein as a destination amongst domestic tour operators.

#### 1.4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

##### 1.4.1. Demarcation of study area

The study is limited to the greater Bloemfontein area excluding Botshabelo.

##### 1.4.2. Literature study

The literature study is based on the following sources:

- Books, literature, magazines, reports and research findings;
- Internet.

##### 1.4.3. Empirical research

Questionnaires regarding the tourism image of Bloemfontein were distributed amongst tour operators in the major metropolitan areas of South Africa. The

questionnaire's contents and credibility was tested with a local tour operator in Bloemfontein namely Astra Tours and Events. The tour operators were identified by using listings of tour operators in reputable travel magazines. The magazines identified are *Getaway* and *The GSA Travel Agents Sales Guide*. SATSA (South African Tourism Services Association) registered tour operators are also included. Tour operators in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban were included in the study as these cities resemble the major metropolitan areas of South Africa and are also the gateway international airports in the country. The empirical research was conducted in the above-mentioned cities from September 2002 - March 2003.

A total number of 109 questionnaires out of a possible 133 tour operators were completed. The questionnaire determined the profile of the tour operator, tested their perception and general knowledge of Bloemfontein and their awareness of Bloemfontein's marketing initiatives. This indicates an 82% response rate. The majority of questionnaires were completed by means of personal interviews, but telephonic interviews and email were also used. An example of the questionnaire is attached in Annexure A.

Questionnaires were completed by the researcher and selected fieldworkers. Fieldworkers were continuously under the guidance of the researcher during the completion of questionnaires.

The statistical analysis was done internally by the Technikon Free State. The information was then analysed to determine the perception or image of Bloemfontein. A quantitative analysis technique was used and open-ended



responses were categorised into meaningful categories through content analysis.

### 1.5. CHAPTER SEQUENCE

This study has six chapters. Chapter 1 concentrates on the introduction, the problem statement and purpose of the study. Chapter 2 gives essential travel and tourism background information, definitions and explains the relationship between the tourist, attractions, travel agents and the tour operators. Chapter 3 focuses on consumer behaviour of the tourist with regards to how and why decisions are made to visit one destination rather than another. Chapter 4 is related to the image of the destination itself and the marketing thereof. Chapter 5 contains a summary of research findings. Finally, in chapter 6, recommendations and conclusions are made to improve the effectiveness of marketing efforts and the destination's image.

## CHAPTER 2

### DEFINING THE ROLE PLAYERS

#### - tourism, the tourist, the tour operator

##### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the emphasis will be on defining the tourism industry, the tourist or traveller, tourist attractions, and the business of tour operators as the manufacturer of a product as a support service to either the tourist directly, or indirectly to the providers of travel products. Attention will be given to the business of tour operators, as the study is based on the perception of tour operators specifically.

The word tourism is associated by many people with pleasure and smiling faces. The way in which people perceive leisure and holidays is determined by the social fabric that surrounds them. Holidays are important periods in people's lives, and they possess the potential for unforgettable experiences.

From a pragmatic viewpoint, consider the fact that people repeatedly spend large sums of money each year on an activity that results in no ownership of assets, that takes them from the comfort of familiar environments to possibly strange places where they neither speak the language nor know the customs, and where they run a real risk of catching diarrhea.

This increases the pressure on the product supplier to supply a product to the satisfaction of the client, and it may only be made possible through providing value for money, fun activities, acceptable facilities and a way for tourists to rediscover themselves. Delivering the dream to tourist customers involves more than a personal passion for service. Tour operators spend fifty-two weeks a year to keep a tourist happy for two weeks.

## 2.2. A WORKING DEFINITION OF TOURISM

The World Travel Dictionary defines tourism as 'the all-embracing' term for the movement of people to destinations away from their place of residence for pleasure, and the multifarious peripheral activities associated with this.' (English, 1998:139). The Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary defines travel merely as "the practice of travelling for recreation" (Britannica Encyclopedia, 2000).

According to Coltman (1989:4), the definition of tourism is not that simple. He states that there are four groups that may be identified and must be taken into consideration when defining tourism: the tourists or visitors, the suppliers, the government of the host destination and lastly the residents in the host destination. When defining tourism, the interrelationships that arise from the interaction between these groups, cannot be ignored.

The interaction that takes place between these groups are usually positive, but it brings about various changes in the host destination, ranging from social

changes (trends that rub off on the host community), economic changes (such as the multiplier effect), environmental changes (pollution, traffic), governmental (new legislation to control wildlife) and demographic (inflow of workforce from country side). Visitors stimulate the suppliers in the host community to supply products and thus promote entrepreneurial activities. Residents experience mixed feelings towards the tourists depending on the phase that they are in. These may vary from feelings like anticipation to irritation.

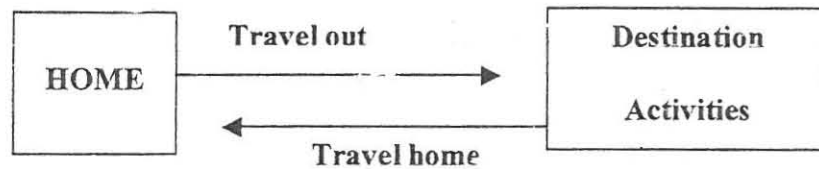
When taking a closer look at tourism, the following common factors may be noted (Holloway, 1993:9 and Hudman & Jackson, 2003:23-24):

- Recreation and activities are present in the form of sports activities, hobbies, pastimes, which could be leisure, family and/or business related;
- Expenditure is usually incurred;
- It involves people away from their normal place of residence, work or habitat.

The tourism industry moves people from home to a temporary destination of interest to them, where they partake in different activities, before returning them home as illustrated in Figure 2.1. A large number of organisations provide a wide range of services at the destination, required to satisfy the many needs of tourists, which include lodging, transportation, nourishing and entertainment.



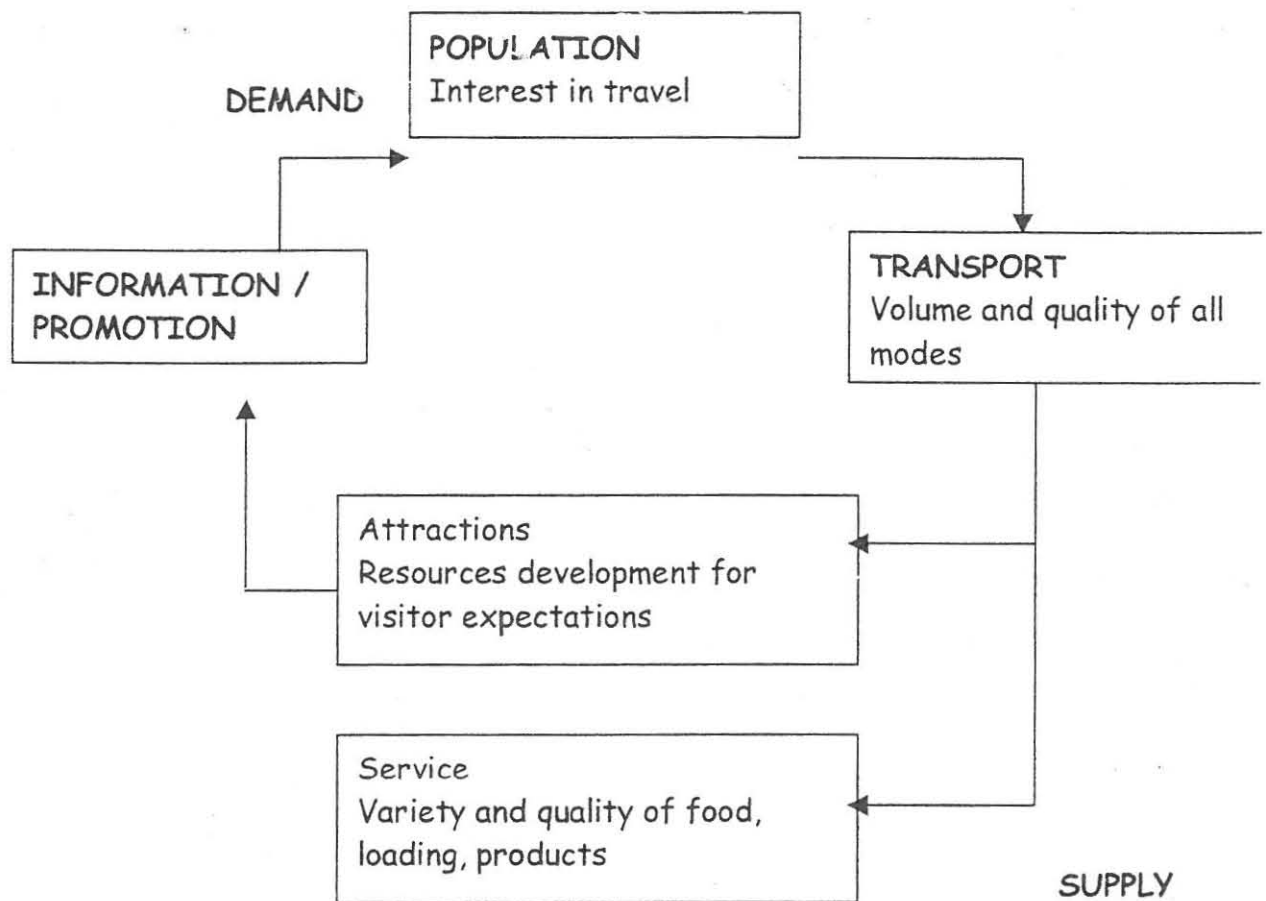
Figure 2.1. The basic tourism model.



Source: Laws (1991:3)

Gunn (as in Swart, 1997:25), elaborated on the above-mentioned model and formulated a system that features a supply and demand side as illustrated in Figure 2.2 (Ritchie & Goeldner, 1994:105). The demand side represents those people who have both the interest and money to travel, and the supply side is represented by transport, attractions, services and promotion and information provided to tourists.

Figure 2.2. The tourism system according to Gunn.



Source: Swart (1997:25)

A more extensive variation of Figures 2.1 and 2.2 is presented by Mill and Morrison (Swart, 1997:29-30). According to their model, a tourism system consists of four parts, namely the market, travel, the destination and marketing. This system works in sequence and relies on interaction between the different parts on the following basis:

**The Market** is influenced by internal and external factors, demand, inputs by tourism suppliers, alternatives to travel and the process by which a buying decision is reached. The decision to travel or become a tourist is made if the individual has learnt in the past that travel satisfies certain needs.

**Travel** refers to a description and analysis of major travel segments, travel flows and modes of transportation used. Decisions must be made with regard to where, when and how to travel.

**The Destination** consists of a mix of attractions and services used by the tourist at the holiday destination, and is the result of a process by the destination area to research, plan, regulate, develop and service the industry.

**Marketing** is the process whereby the destination area and individual suppliers market their products and services to potential consumers through the development of a marketing plan, the selection of an appropriate marketing mix and the choice of a distribution channel.

In conclusion it may be said that a study of tourism should at least include the following (Heath and Wall, 1992:4 and Smith, 1995:22-23):

- People away from their usual habitat;
- Establishments that respond to the requirements of tourists;
- The impact of tourism on the economic, physical and social well-being of the host;
- Motivations and experiences of the tourist;

- Behaviour of residents in reception areas;
- Roles played by numerous agencies that interact between the parties involved.

## 2.3. WHAT IS A TOURIST OR TRAVELLER?

### 2.3.1. Definition

According to Bennett (1998:5), and Voase (1999:4), a tourist is generally defined as a person making a discretionary, temporary visit, which involves at least one overnight stay away from home. The person need not have vocational intentions away from home. The reasons for travelling could be business, pleasure, visiting family, relatives or friends or a range of other reasons.

According to Voase (1999:4), there are two qualifications for a tourist:

- The point at which a tourist becomes a resident. Residency is determined by whether or not the tourist is paying taxes at the destination.
- A day-tripper or excursionist: technically a day-tripper is not a tourist because it does not include an overnight stay, however certain theme parks, museums and theatres depend on day visitors for their income.



When attempting to define a tourist or traveller, there are certain dimensions that should be considered (Bennett, 1998:5):

- Journey: this tends to involve a stay of at least twenty-four hours away from home to distinguish between a tourist visiting a destination and someone in transit.
- Activity: this is the use of time and money for recreation or business.
- Consumption: tourists spend money on various items in excess of any incidental remuneration gained.
- Visit: tourists make temporary departures away from home with the intention to return at some point in the future.

It is difficult to formulate specific barometers when defining tourists and travel related aspects. Therefore, according to Gee et al., 1989:16, an elaboration on the dimensions noted above is necessary, in an attempt to define a tourist or traveller even further:

- Distance away from home: this is the only dimension that may be used to distinguish between local travel (within home community) and non-local travel (travelling away from home).
- Residence of tourist: the origin of the tourist where he or she lives (domicili) rather than his/her nationality or citizenship.

- Purpose of travel: This may be broken down into the following categories:
  - Visiting friends and relatives;
  - Conventions, seminars, meetings, missionary work;
  - Business;
  - Indoor and outdoor recreation, pleasure, holiday, sport;
  - Entertainment;
  - Personal (medical, funeral, wedding);
  - Relaxation;
  - Health;
  - Studies.

### 2.3.2. The tourist experience

Ryan (1997:58), researched 1127 respondents posing open-ended questions to them to indicate what experiences they had most enjoyed about their holiday. Table 2.1 indicates the most frequently mentioned items.

Johnson & Thomas (1994:82), in his research lists similar activities usually undertaken on holiday and includes the following:

- Touring, exploring, excursions;
- Visit historic sites and attractions;
- Recreation;
- Hiking, river rafting, adventure sports;
- Clubs, pubs, discos, dancing, bars;

- Skiing, winter sports, climbing;
- Course, educational, skills learnt.

Table 2.1. Things that tourists enjoy.

ITEM	NUMBER OF MENTIONS
Relaxing	198
Good climate	159
Scenery	153
Exploring	148
Food	120
Being with family/friends	81
Good walking	64
Freedom/independence	62
Friendly people	60
Good accommodation	59
History/culture	54
Beaches	48
Getting away from stressful job	46
Sport	46
Style of living/culture	35
Company	34
Facilities for children	27
Entertainment	23
Clean	17
Good facilities	13
Different country	12
Wildlife	11
Swimming pools	11

Source: Ryan (1997:59)

It is evident from table 2.1 that tourists' enjoyment of their holiday is based on the destination and its unique characteristics, relaxation and food. Three of the top five things that tourists enjoy are related to the destination specifically - scenery, good climate and exploring at the destination.

In conclusion, Figure 2.3 condenses the tourist experience as a whole (Ryan, 1997:54 and Gnoth, 1998:262-263). In this illustration, emphasis is placed on the destination and what it has to offer the tourist, the travel experience with regards to getting to the destination, the interaction with locals and own group members, choices to be made based on the journey, the place and its people, personal factors which influence the choice of holiday, and the level of satisfaction as experienced by the tourist (the consequences).

Different destinations are associated with different profiles of holiday activities. The reason for selecting a main holiday destination will vary according to activity undertaken or planned. Certain destinations are more popular than others; the probabilities not only reflect those of particular activities but also the popularity of the destination area in general. Past holiday destinations and activities are also used to infer a system of expectations.





## 2.4. WHAT IS A TOURIST ATTRACTION?

### 2.4.1. Definition

The English Tourist Board defines a tourist attraction as a permanently established excursion destination, a primary purpose of which is to allow public access for entertainment, interest or education; rather than being a primary retail outlet or a venue for sporting, theatrical or film performances. It must be open to the public, without prior booking for published periods each year, and should be capable of attracting day visitors or tourists as well as local residents. In this regard, without prior booking refers to attractions being open to the public on a daily basis, and visitors may come and go as they wish (Visit Britain, 2000).

According to Bennett (1998:8-9), an attraction forms the very base of tourism. Ferrario (as in Bennett, 1998:57), defines it as "something interesting to see or to do" and Mancini (1996:147), describes it as "the points of interest that help attract tourists to a destination in the first place" and "sites around which the tour companies shape their itineraries."

Tourist attractions as a component of the tourism product should be strong enough to pull the visitor away from home and provide him or her with travel satisfaction (Nickerson, 1996:183-186).

#### 2.4.2. Types of attractions:

Youell (1996:187-189) and Gartner (1996:352-354), identify the following types of tourist attractions:

- Heritage: The aim of these attractions is to depict what life was like at a particular time in the past.
- Cultural: These attractions display the cultural diversity in the world.
- Theme parks: Parks like these offer permanent rides and entertainment in a themed setting, providing something for the whole family.
- Historic: Attractions like monuments, castles and ministers are examples of these and they are normally in public ownership.
- Sport and recreation: These centres offer pools, leisure centres and sporting activities.
- Natural: Landscapes, coastlines and mountains are all examples of natural attractions.
- Entertainment: Facilities that provide entertainment opportunities like nightclubs, arenas, opera houses and theatres.

The English Tourist Board supports the above-mentioned division, but also adds to its list the following (Holliday, 1993:130-131):

- Museums and art galleries;
- Wildlife parks;
- Gardens and country parks;
- Steam railways.

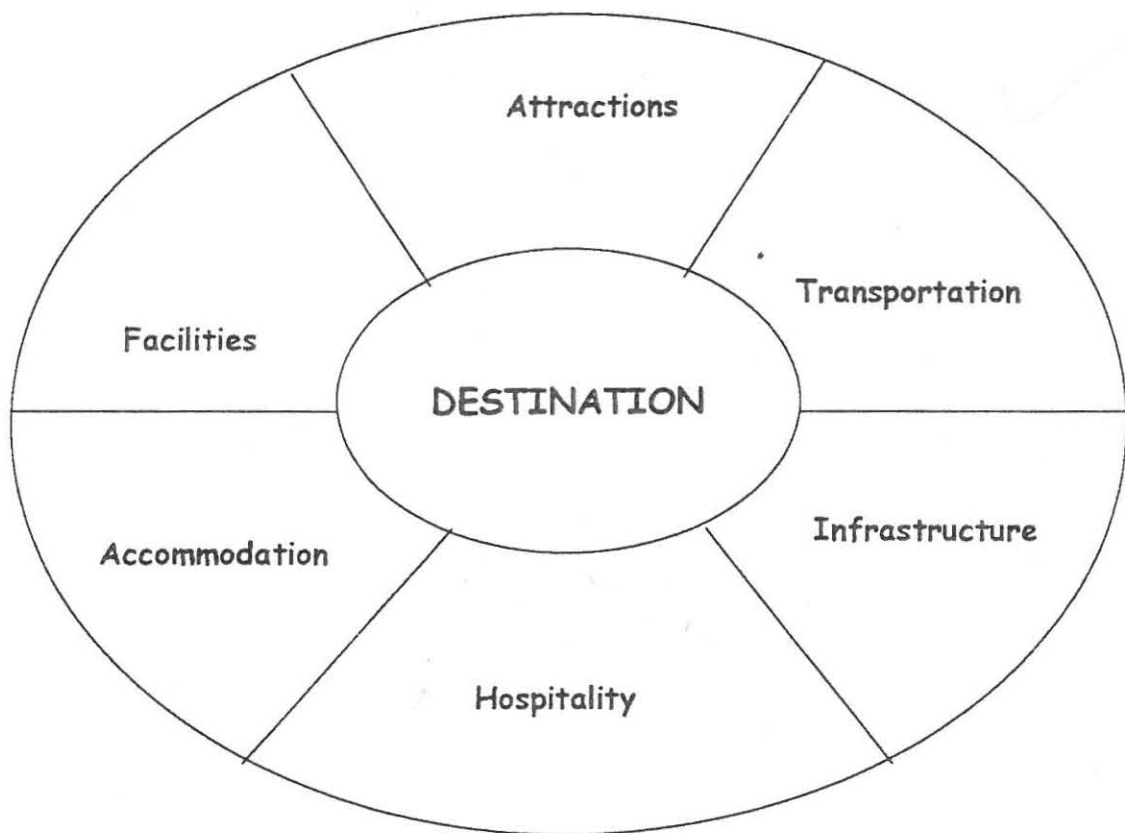
Furthermore, it draws a distinction between different categories of attractions according to their nature:

- Man-made or natural attractions, which have been created by the intervention of man and include ancient and modern architectural structures, monuments, parks, managed tourist attractions, casinos, sport stadiums and retail areas (Bennett, 1998:9).
- Nodal or linear attractions. Nodal refers to a clearly designated and narrowly defined area, while linear will involve the movement of tourists from one place to another.
- Site and event attractions. Events may be temporary, and many sites owe their attraction to events that take place there.

### 2.4.3. Attractions in relation to the destination

If the definition of an attraction is examined closely, it is evident that an attraction and the destination cannot exist in isolation. Attractions are normally an integral part of the destination, as indicated in Figure 2.4.

Figure 2.4. Components of a destination



Source: Youell (1996:186).



It is evident from Figure 2.4 that the destination may be a quite complex topic. So, for instance it comprises the following:

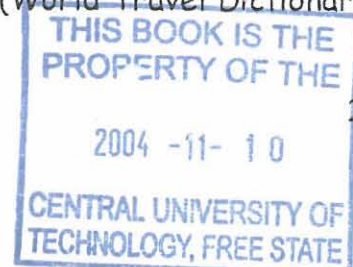
- **Attractions** - these are often the stimuli for a visit.
- **Transportation** - ensures accessibility for visitors.
- **Hospitality** - the way in which tourist services are delivered to visitors.
- **Infrastructure** - roads, airports, utility services around which tourist facilities are developed.
- **Accommodation** - providing visitors with a place to stay.
- **Facilities** - extra services e.g. guiding, shopping, information centres.

Laws (1995:14), supports the above-mentioned approach, and also emphasises the complexity of a destination. According to him, there are two factors that contribute to the attractiveness of a destination. The *primary* features like climate, ecology, culture and landforms, and the *secondary* features like hotels, catering, transport, activities and amusement are all designed specifically for the tourist.

## 2.5. WHAT IS A TOUR OPERATOR?

### 2.5.1. A working definition of a tour operator

A tour operator or tour organiser is defined as an organisation that puts together an inclusive holiday for sale to the public (World Travel Dictionary,



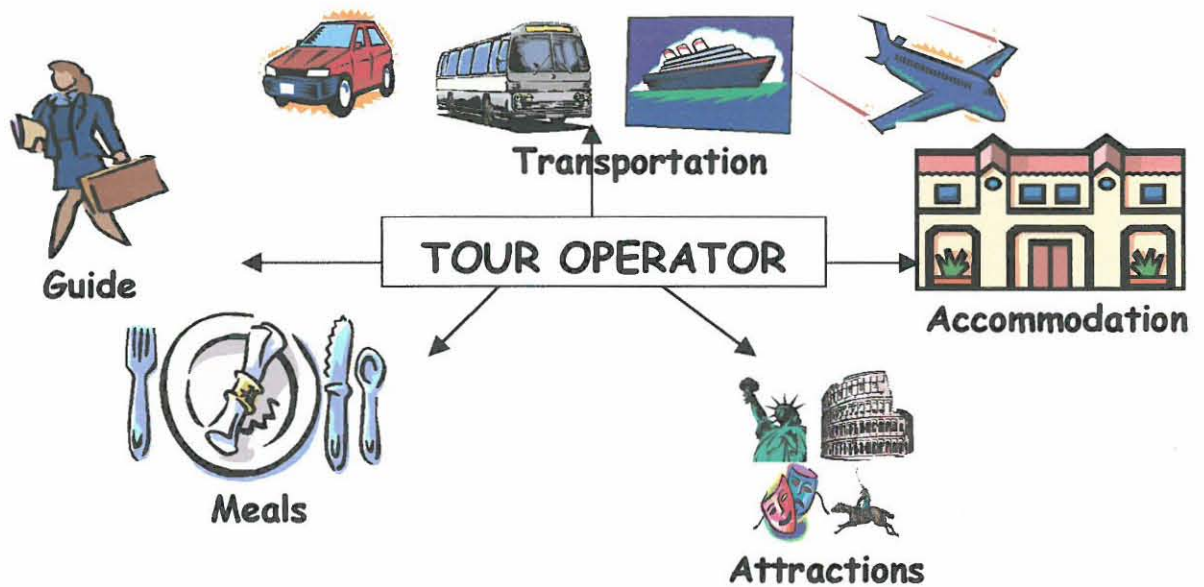
1998:139). Todd & Rice (1996:151), elaborates on this definition and says that a tour operator is a company that sells tours through a travel agent directly to the public, and the tours may include one or more components: transportation, accommodation, transfers, meals and sightseeing. McIntosh et al. (1995:139), agrees with this statement, but adds that tour operator packages are offered to the public at lower prices because they may buy their services at discount prices. Cooper et al. (1999:256), describe tour operating as a process of combining aircraft seats and beds in hotels or other forms of accommodation, in a manner that will make the purchase attractive to potential holiday makers (Buhalis, 2003:242-243).

Tour operators select destinations, resorts, hotels or other accommodation and package these elements with the basic component of holidays, namely travel (Figure 2.5). They plan itineraries, what route to take, where to stay and what to see. All the different components are purchased in advance or supplied by the tour operators themselves. These packages are then marketed and sold directly to the public or via a travel agent<sup>2</sup> at a published, inclusive price in which the cost of the package components cannot be identified separately (Lubbe, 2000:254-255).

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<sup>2</sup> A travel agent may be defined as someone who acts on behalf of a principal like a hotel, car hire company, airline or tour operator. The travel agent sells the principal's services to final consumers and receives, in return, a commission on each sale but accepts no liability for services rendered by the principal. (Bennett, 1998:66).

**Figure 2.5. Elements used by tour operators to manufacture their products**



Source: Resnick (1991:104).

A package may be designed specifically for the general public or for wholesale by travel agents and may either be independent (without an escort) or escorted. These product packages are usually standardised and are repeatable offers at different dates. The services that may be included in the package may be a combination of the following: transportation, transfers, accommodation, meals, attractions, car rental and air transportation (Gee et al., 1989: 181, Mancini, 1996:175 and Witt & Moutinho, 1994:399).

The reasons for the existence of a tour operator are, according to Middleton (1994:294), the following:

- To facilitate and simplify the process of choice and booking for customers, and provide both psychological and financial security in a 'single purchase' transaction.
- To overcome the inherent inefficiencies in the markets for leisure travel and tourism, especially for international travel.
- To deliver price advantages that customers are usually unable to achieve for themselves, due to the fact that tour operators negotiate special fares and buy in bulk.

The reasons why tourists choose group travel as offered by tour operators may be any of the following (Mancini, 1996:2):

- The freedom from hassles and decision-making.
- The desire to save time and money.
- Companionship of people with similar interests.
- The educational nature of touring.
- Lack of alternatives during events and festivals.

A very strong relationship exists between the tour operator and the travel agent (Davidson, 1993:58-64). According to Yale (1995:21), ninety percent of



all overseas packages in the UK are sold by travel agents. The position in South Africa will have to be tested in a separate research study.

Travel agents may be seen as the distribution system for the operator's intangible product. The travel agent is paid commission of usually ten percent on sales, whilst the tour operator will supply the travel agent with all the necessary equipment like brochures and a reservation system. Tour operators stimulate sales by using incentives like shopping vouchers, discounted holidays for the travel agents, and educational trips to their destinations.

### 2.5.2. Categories of tour operators

Tour operators may be divided into four categories (Bennett, 1998:64 and Holloway, 1993:125-128):

#### **2.5.2.1. Mass market operators**

This type of operator sells large numbers of inclusive tours by air and/or coach and promotes popular destinations like 'sun and sand' holidays. According to Yale (1995:79), the summer sun holidays are the most popular and make up to an average of eighty percent of the total holiday market in the United Kingdom.

The mass-market consumers may be motivated by a desire for:

- A low cost product;



- Visiting destinations that are clearly popular with well developed infrastructure;
- Company of other tourists;
- Passive, resort-based holidays.

#### 2.5.2.2. Specialist operators

These operators target specific market segments with special characteristics and interests (history), unusual destinations (Guatemala), specific age groups (pensioners), transportation (4x4), and accommodation (bush camp) requirements.

Swarbrooke & Horner (1999:165), states that the consumer that buys a specialist tour operator's package may be motivated by his/her wish to:

- Appear to be a sophisticated consumer;
- Pursue a particular personal interest;
- Visit less popular destinations that are 'off the beaten track';
- Mix with relatively few other tourists.

#### 2.5.2.3. Domestic operators

The main business of these tour operators is to sell tours in their home country only.

#### 2.5.2.4. Incoming operators

They specialise in selling tours to a specific destination, for instance diving tours to Eilat, 4x4 excursions to Southern Africa or hunting safaris in Africa.

#### 2.5.3. Potential problems facing tour operators

One of the major problems for tour operators are matching supply with demand, especially when it comes to leisure markets. The tour operator bears the risk of researching and organising a programme many months ahead of its sale, the cost of brochures and marketing, and the installation of a reservation system. The tour operator has no guarantee that the final product will sell and how well it will sell (Laws, 1999:35).

As people travel more and become more experienced as tourists, the trend seems to change from the traditional all-inclusive package holidays to more flexible, creative packages (Swarbrooke, 1995:268). Most destinations are discovered by independent tourists on the look out for something unique. As word spreads about the destination, it will become increasingly popular and well known and it will eventually attract the tour operator as well. When the tour operator moves in, then exclusivity moves out and the destination usually becomes overdeveloped which affects its desirability (Yale, 1995:260).

According to Plog (1991:89), the need for tours, especially heavy escorted ones, have declined because of:

- A changing psychology of leisure travel. Due to the influence of technology, the world has become smaller and a destination that was previously remote, has today become within the reach of the tourist;
- The gradually changing images of what tours are and the benefits provided, versus their negative qualities. As tourists become more experienced, they tend to rather travel individually which ensures more freedom. On the other hand, the operators might be able to offer a cheaper package because of their corporate and bulk discounts.

#### 2.5.4. The importance of attractions to the tour operator

Attractions at a destination are very important to a tour operator (Briguglio, 2001:77-78). According to Swarbrooke (1995:20), tour operators prefer destinations that have:

- A variety of attractions and services that may be combined for an optimal experience.
- A range of attractions within a short distance that may be visited on day or half day trips. Often these attractions are very different from the destination, which makes the clients feel like they are visiting a completely new destination.
- Attractions available to keep visitors occupied during off -peak seasons.

- Specialist attractions that are vital for special interest tours like historical, cultural, and adventure tours.
- Quality attractions that will stimulate repeat visits.

#### 2.5.5. Putting the package together

Bennett (1998:65-66), Yale (1995:60,72) and Holloway (1993:163-171), describe the main objectives of tour operators when packaging their tours as a difficult and long process. This may happen as long as eighteen months in advance and involves a lot of negotiating with suppliers, research, planning and forecasting demand. Bennett (1998:65), states that the main business functions of the tour operator is researching the needs of the market, undertaking familiarisation trips to establish the tour potential, and the preparation of detailed tour specifications. Figure 2.6 illustrates the sequence of constructing an all-inclusive tour programme.

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### 2.5.5.1. Planning / Preparation:

#### 2.5.5.1.1. Deciding on the product mix

The study of the definition of a tour operator shows that tour operators combine different elements to obtain the final product (De Souto, 1993:74-75). Deciding between, and combining the different products, is vital for the tour operator and the success or popularity of the tour. Factors to be taken into consideration are:

- Current trends in the industry.
- Type and standard of accommodation.
- Departure dates and duration of trip.
- Researched market needs.
- Size of the market.
- Feedback from staff and clients.
- Form of transportation.
- Schedule of frequency
- Financial evaluation and pricing.

Bennett (1998:65-66), Yale (1995:60,72) and Holloway (1993:163-171), describe the main issues to be taken into account by tour operators when packaging their tours as follows:

- A research study of past and potential tour patterns.
- Types of destinations offered by competitors.

- Availability of new, exciting destinations or resorts.
- Seasonality of destination.
- An evaluation of ground services at destination.
- Conduct a survey amongst travel agents.
- The undertaking of familiarisation trips.
- Investigate possible external factors.
- The availability of attractions and events at the destination.
- An investigation of client expectations.
- External judgments in magazines of the destination.
- The possibility to maintain standards at a far-off destination.

#### 2.5.5.1.2 Marketing the product

The last step in the planning process is to decide how this tour will be marketed amongst its target market(s). According to Bennett (1998:65), and Plog (1991:96), the factors that will influence the marketing of the tour are the following:

- Brochure design and cost.
- Distribution to retail agents.
- Personal selling through representatives and educational tours to travel agents.
- Reservation system design.

#### 2.5.5.2. Negotiations

The tour operator's product consists of a number of elements. To produce a package that will be successful in the market, it needs to satisfy the needs of the consumer, but it is also very important that the package should be priced competitively. Tour operators need to negotiate with mainly the airlines and accommodation providers in order to obtain the best possible deal, which are then combined with other services for distribution (McIntosh et al., 1995:139).

##### 2.5.5.2.1. Negotiating with hotels

Mancini (1996:97, 100-101), and Holloway (1993:135), describe negotiations as a very important aspect of the tour operator's responsibilities. Before choosing an accommodation establishment, operators should pay attention to reservation and registration procedures, special facilities, languages spoken, porter handling procedures and fire and safety precautions.

The reservation of hotel rooms takes place twelve to eighteen months prior to departure where tour operators make a commitment to buy a specific number of rooms irrespective of the number used. This makes the price per room much cheaper but the risk much higher. Allocation of rooms may also take place where the hotel will guarantee the rooms until a specified date, usually four to six weeks prior to departure, after which the rooms will be released for sale by the hotel. Additional rooms may then only be guaranteed, subject to availability. This method is not as risky as the previous one mentioned (Yale, 1995:60).

Operators may also book rooms on an ad hoc basis when required. This is the most costly method but involves no risk to the operator.

The last option available to operators is hotel ownership at popular resorts or destinations. The only major problem is the 'immovability' of the property if the destination becomes unpopular.

#### 2.5.5.2.2. Negotiating with airlines

The tour operator once again has a few options when negotiating with airlines regarding the number of seats, conditions, penalties and unutilized seats. The flight plan, frequency of operations and airports to be used, must also be negotiated. Airline ownership is the easiest way to gain control over stock of air seats. This is not such a high risk as accommodation ownership at destinations, as flight schedules and routings may be changed according to season, popularity and destination. Surplus seats may also be subcontracted (Yale, 1995:66 and De Souto, 1993:112-113).

Scheduled airlines offer timetabled services around the world, which operate regardless of the number of passengers booked. Mancini, (1996:118) also states that scheduled airfares are very competitive nowadays and may usually be booked through a central reservation system, buying and canceling seats as and when needed. Tour operators usually contract a specific number of seats, which will be released back to the airline a month before departure.



Charter flights are flexible and sometimes cheaper than scheduled flights depending on the itinerary, according to Holloway, 1993:136. The range and standard of onboard services offered by charter airlines are limited at times. Open jaw flights may be problematic but the situation may be resolved by using a combination of group itineraries (Briguglio, 2001:74-75).

#### 2.5.5.3 Pricing

The price of an all-inclusive holiday package exists between what the market will bear on the one side and the cost of providing the holiday. Price must be competitive but profitable and it is usually used as an indicator of quality, which gives the tour operator the opportunity to secure higher margins.

Tour operators will take into account the following factors when pricing their products (Cooper et al., 1999:266 and De Souto, 1996:138-141):

- Exchange rate movements;
- Competitors' prices and the degree of product differentiation;
- Promotional pricing to encourage early booking and late availability discounts;
- Market segmentation pricing with special offers to students, senior citizens, families and children;
- Discount for group travel.

The major problem in calculating the cost of a package is forecasting the costs and sales, which is often done about eighteen months in advance. Once a forecast has been made, budgets must be drawn up to fit within it. Getting the



forecast wrong may have serious consequences, which could imply unsold holidays, thereby cutting potential profitability.

#### 2.5.5.3.1 Keeping costs down

The price of air transportation, if applicable, represents a high portion of the outlay and there are several ways the cost may be minimized (Yale, 1995:181):

- Airline ownership implies greater control and better hope of controlling costs;
- Operating flights 'back to back' and minimizing airport charges.
- Assuming a high break-even point when calculating costs.
- Night flights have lower airport charges.
- Running a year-round programme may reduce the risk of 'empty leg' flights.

#### 2.5.6. A tour operator and its environment

In order for a tour operator to survive, the services or products provided must be firmly rooted in the needs of customers as well as suppliers. The tour operator cannot control the external environment but it has a major impact on both customers and suppliers, which places additional pressure on the tour operator.

Some of the external factors, which cannot be controlled by the tour operator and which regularly have an impact on a tour operator's decisions, are according to Yale (1995:251):

- Foreign exchange rates.
- Interest rates home and abroad.
- Inflation.
- Fuel costs.
- Levels of unemployment in tourist generating country.
- Diseases / health problems.
- Natural disasters.
- War.
- Political change.
- Terrorist activities.
- Airport delays and aircraft accidents.
- Weather.
- Crime.
- General bad publicity.
- Fashion / image.

Due to the nature of this study field, emphasis will be placed on fashion / image. The tourism product has a distinct life cycle and is subject to trends and changes that is influenced by what is considered to be fashionable or not, by the general public or tourists.

## 2.6. Conclusion

The process of selling holidays has often been compared with the selling of dreams. Working in tourism is easily viewed from the outside as a glamorous option, but the reality is that delivering other people's dreams involves a lot of hard work. A customer will judge a £20 million hotel by whether a cup of coffee is available at ten o'clock in the evening or not.

The responsibility of working in tourism is greater than in many other consumer industries because the customer entrusts the provider with his or her very being. The provider must accommodate, feed and reassure the customer in surroundings, which may be unfamiliar, and, for some, a little frightening.

Tourism is reckoned by many to be the world's largest industry, which implies that a substantial income may be generated from it, if a successful product is created that satisfies the needs and wants of every buyer or tourist. It is therefore important to study consumer behaviour, to establish the exact reasons why a consumer (tourist) makes specific decisions (Diamantis, 1998:515-517).

## CHAPTER 3

# THE ROLE OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN DECISION MAKING FOR TOURISM

### 3.1. INTRODUCTION

Consumer (tourist) behaviour is **multi-motivational**. The behaviour itself is diverse, because even though needs are few, the expression of the needs are many. The **decision** to take a holiday stems from these individual **needs**, desires and preferences, which in turn determine **motivation** (Swarbrooke & Horner, 1999:3).

Tourists are subjected to influences from their environment and are bound to be influenced by the forces at work within their own environment when making decisions. A detailed understanding (through research) of clients' differing needs enables the tourism organisation to distinguish its services for particular groups of clients according to their separate interests, and to direct its marketing communication to specified target audiences. Few services, tourism products or destinations will be able to satisfy the needs of the total market- thus the need to be selective or for segmentation.

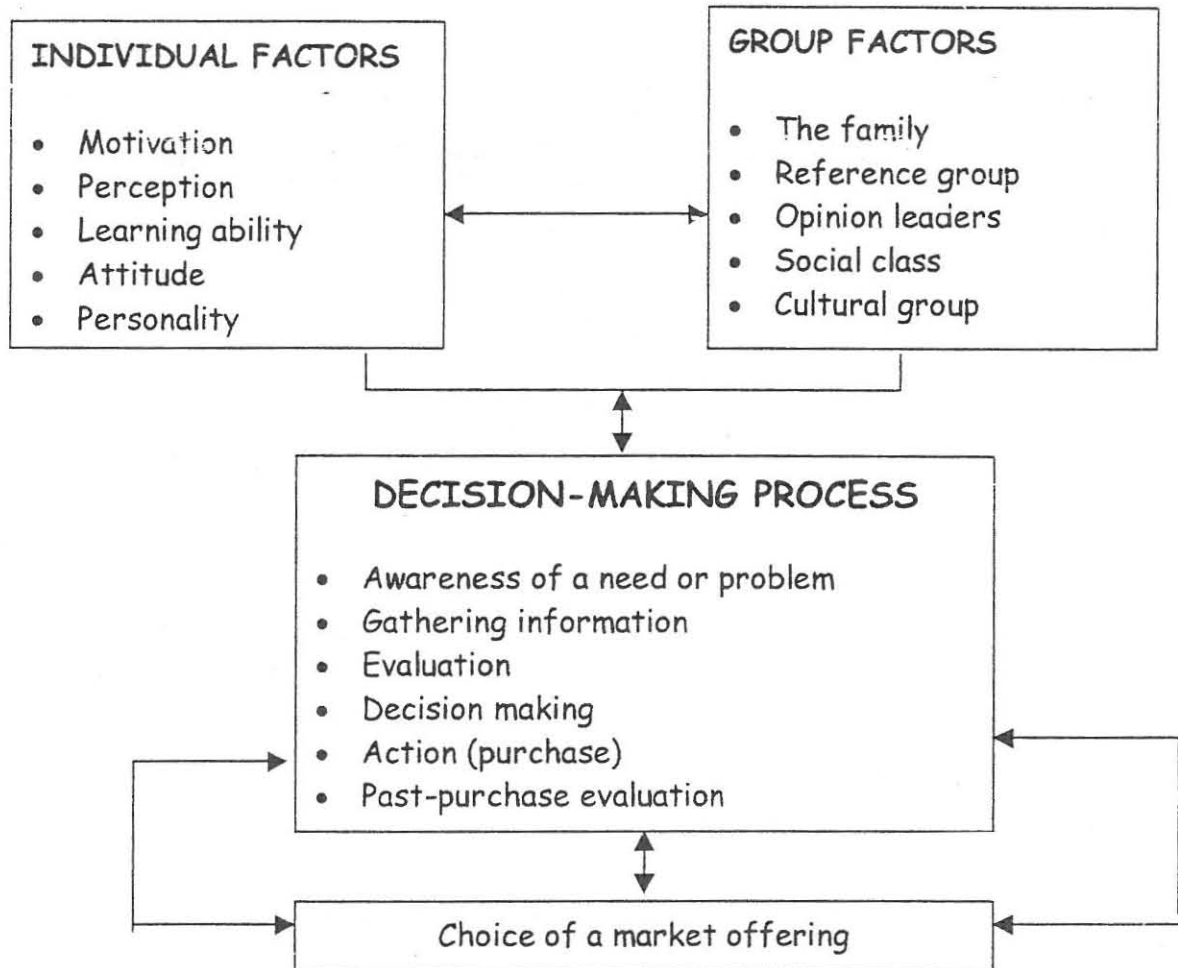
The subject of consumer-behaviour is the key to the underpinning of all marketing activity, which is carried out to develop, promote and sell tourism products. The ideal would be to understand how consumers make their decisions

to purchase or use tourism products. Once the behaviour patterns are understood, it becomes easy to know when the need to intervene in the process arises to obtain the wanted results. The product owner will know whom to target at a particular time with a particular tourism product designed more effectively to meet the particular needs and wants of the tourist (Swarbrooke & Horner, 1999:3).

The consumer is influenced by individual and group factors that lead to the decision-making process. The process is completed with the choice of a specific product aimed at the fulfilment of specific needs (Marx & van der Walt, 1993:77). Figure 3.1 gives a summarised overview of all the variables involved in the theory of consumer behaviour. Each sub-section or title will be discussed later in this chapter.



**Figure 3.1. An overview of consumer behaviour**



Source: Marx & van der Walt, 1993:77

## **3.2. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE HOLIDAY DECISION**

### **3.2.1. Individual factors**

At personal level it is clear that no two individuals are alike and differences in attitude, perceptions, image and motivation have an important influence on travel

decisions (Todd, 1999:1023-1024). It is important to note that (Cooper et al., 1999:31):

- Attitudes depend on an individual's perception of the world;
- Perceptions are mental impressions of a place or thing and are determined by many factors, which include childhood, family and work experiences, education, books, television programmes, films and promotional images. Perception involves the encoding of information by individuals, and influences attitudes and behaviour towards products but does not explain by itself, or when combined with attitudes, why people want to travel;
- Travel motivators explain why people want to travel and they are inner urges that initiate travel and demand;
- Images are sets of beliefs, ideas and impressions relating to products and destinations.

In the following paragraphs, each one of the individual and group factors indicated in Figure 3.1, will be discussed individually.

#### **3.2.1.1. The motivation to travel**

Motivation is an abstract concept describing how behaviour gets started, is energized, sustained, directed, stopped and what kind of subjective reaction is present in the organism while all this is going on. Motivation may not be heard,

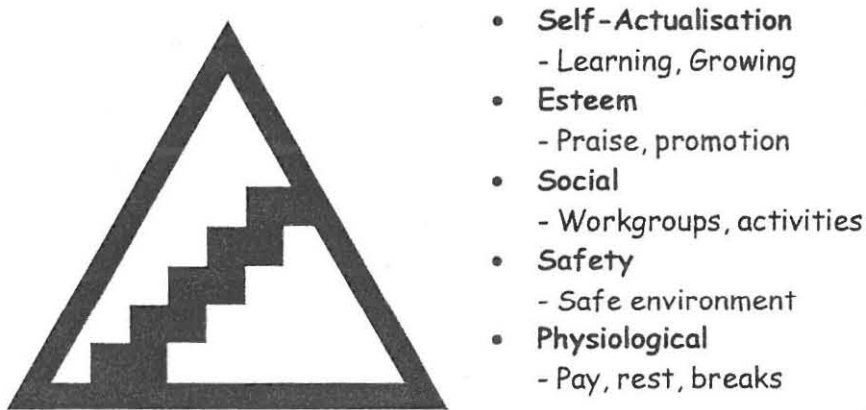
seen or felt; it may only be inferred from behaviour and is expressed through personality. The basis of motivation lies in human behaviour and the characteristics of human behaviour may be broken up into five categories namely perception, attitudes and values, interests, feelings and personal traits (UVIC, 2000). Motivation is known as the psychological influences affecting individuals' choices.

Motivation is the internal factors at work in people or individuals, expressed as **needs** and **desires** being the driving force behind actions and is thus an intensely personal matter. No two people have exactly the same needs or buying motives and the same person may think, feel and act differently at different times. Even though these differences exist, there are many similarities in the process of satisfying customer needs. Needs alone do not determine what kind of product a person looks for, but needs determine broadly what the potential customer wants, and there are usually a number of potential solutions or possibilities. Customers also have certain wishes as to how they want the provider to treat them. Both needs and wishes are important in the development of customer expectations and behaviour (AIIT, 2000 and Gartner, 1996:308-314).

As a tourist progresses through the buying process, several factors help shape the nature of the purchasing decision. There is a strong relationship between motivation and consumer behaviour. Although many psychological aspects of consumer behaviour are not understood, motivations seem to be present in every decision. Motivation may be seen as the driving force, which impels action, in order to attain a specific objective or to satisfy a specific need (Ryan & Glendon, 1998:170, 172).

Much of the work on tourist motivation is based on a content theory approach of the study of motivation, as exemplified by Maslow's theory of needs as illustrated in Figure 3.2 (Bennett, 1998:81 & 154, RSCC, 2000 and Lazer & Layton, 1999:106). These motivational theories help explain why people act in the manner that they do.

Figure 3.2. Maslow's hierarchy of needs



Source : RSCC, 2000

According to Gee et al., (1989:53), BEN (2000) and UVIC (2000), Maslow's hierarchy of human needs ranges from a most basic level of psychological needs to self-actualisation needs at the highest human urge level. These needs are satisfied in various ways, making it difficult to construct a generalised operational basis for relating pleasure travel to specific motivators. For some people, pleasure is shopping, gambling or romance. Others find it more enjoyable



to watch television or play tennis. Maslow's theory states that a person's lower level of needs has to be satisfied before the needs of the next level become operative. Any two levels may also be operative at the same time (Lewis et al., 1995:200-201).

Each of the needs identified by Maslow as illustrated in Figure 3.2, is discussed in more detail below: (Bennett, 1998:81 & 154, Du Plessis et al., 1997:79-80, McIntosh et al., 1995:172-175:

- **Psychological needs.** These needs are associated with the body's physical performance and include needs like hunger, thirst, sex, sleep, and human survival. The tendency is to believe that feelings are not part of psychological needs, but this is incorrect. Feelings form part of the wellness of the body.
- **Safety needs.** These needs concern personal security and relates to the entire person. Included are insurance, job security, hospital care, safety, freedom from physical and emotional insecurity and a comfortable environment.
- **Affiliation (social) needs.** The need to belong is a psychological requirement associated with caring and relating harmoniously with others. These needs include friendship, acceptance, relationships, love, commitment and belonging. This is a fundamental need that affects almost everything one does.



- **Esteem needs.** This denotes the psychological requirement of maintaining a favorable image or impression of oneself and may be seen in the way a person dresses and relates to others. Esteem is demonstrated by others in the form of prestige, fame, recognition and status.
- **Self-actualisation needs.** This involves personal ambition, fulfilment and aestheticism, which express the need for beauty and order. It refers to reaching goals, being what you want to be, realising your own potential and self-fulfilment (Bennett, 1998:81 & 154, Du Plessis et al., 1997:79-80, McIntosh et al., 1995:172-175 and TDC, 2000).

According to Ryan (1997:29-32), the motivational needs derived from the work of Maslow are:

- The intellectual component, which assesses the extent to which individuals are motivated to engage in leisure activities. The intellectual needs may be primary drives (a high need) or triggered by a specific event or environment (a low need). The need to search for knowledge is high.
- The social component, which is the extent to which individuals engage in leisure activities for social reasons. Holidays are ego and status enhancing experiences.
- The competence-mastery component, which is the extent to which individuals engage in leisure activities in order to achieve, master, challenge and compete. These activities are usually of a physical nature. For tourists, the

need for a demonstration of mastery in physical activities will vary with the type of holiday.

- The stimulus-avoidance component, which assesses the drive to escape and get away from over-stimulating life situations. This may be the need for solitude, calm conditions, rest and opportunity to unwind. This is perhaps the most obvious reason for taking a holiday. The very action of physical exertion itself may be mentally restful even while, paradoxically, the mind is focused upon a specific action.

Schmidthauser (1989) in Johnson & Thomas, (1994:43), reported that the research he carried out on travel motives, showed that a single trip cannot satisfy all the touristic needs of one person. Each trip may only cover a part of the needs. He studied the travel motives of nine thousand seven hundred and eighty nine respondents and list four sociological motivations:

- To compensate for the many defects that everyday life in a working performance society inevitably brings. These defects may be lack of freedom, defects in closeness to nature, enjoyment, luxury, prestige, climatic, social and human defects.
- Physical and psychological recovery from stress, the pleasure of performance and the monotony of everyday life, finding again or keeping physical and mental well-being.
- Widening horizons, satisfying curiosity, self-realisation, increase of feeling of one's own value.
- Self-reward and self-indulgence.

Other well-known motivational theories that exist are those of David McClelland and Frederick Herzberg as seen in Bennett (1998:155), McIntosh et al. (1995:71) and BEN (2000). These theories will not be discussed extensively in this study, but are only highlighted to ensure the completeness of the study. Herzberg's motivation theory, is widely known by practicing managers, and is based on two sets of factors namely dissatisfiers (or hygiene factors) and satisfiers (motivational or maintenance factors). Generally, hygiene factors deal with the work environment and will never create real satisfaction with a job, where satisfiers are tied to the work itself and may increase or decrease satisfaction of the task itself. McClelland follows a social approach with a different look at needs that are based on achievement such as:

- The need to excel;
- Power with the desire to change others' behaviour;
- Affiliation and the desire for close relationships.

Achievement and power both lead to different types of assertive behaviour, and power and affiliation interact to produce either methods of control or more democratic forms if the concern for people is higher.

Ryan (1997:35), shows the differences in motivation between males and females when taking holidays (Table 3.1.) Very little difference exists between the intellectual, competency and social items, but the relaxation scores differ significantly. Comparing mental and physical relaxation between males and females, a difference of approximately 0.50 may be noticed, compared to other differences of approximately 0.10 and 0.20.



Table 3.1. Gender motivations and travel<sup>3</sup>

ITEM	MALES (N=523)	FEMALES (N=490)
Increase my knowledge	4.36	4.45
Avoid daily hustle and bustle	5.56	5.80
Build friendships with others	3.51	3.46
Challenge my abilities	2.74	2.71
Use my imagination	3.49	3.49
Be in a calm atmosphere	5.35	5.48
Develop close friendships	2.52	2.47
Use my physical abilities	2.61	2.56
<b>Relax physically</b>	<b>5.28</b>	<b>5.73</b>
Gain a feeling of belonging	2.55	3.16
Discover new places and new things	5.84	6.05
<b>Relax mentally</b>	<b>5.82</b>	<b>6.14</b>
Be with others	3.57	3.90
Have a 'good time' with friends	3.83	3.87

Source: Ryan (1997:35).

<sup>3</sup> Values are based on a 7-point scale where 7 represents the maximum score that may be obtained.

If the real reason for taking a holiday is to relax, unwind and rediscover yourself, then the apparent reasons for taking a holiday may be concerned with prestige and status. Holidays have now joined other major consumables as a prerequisite for modern living and they have become a marker of status in today's life, as noted in Voase (1995:70-71), where Crompton undertook qualitative research consisting of unstructured interviews amongst thirty-nine respondents to test this statement. His results suggest the following:

- Prestige motives are not involved in own decisions, but are observable in other people's decisions. Perhaps self-consciousness creates a reluctance to admit that prestige played a part in decisions on choice of destination. The ability to observe such a motivation in others is indicative of its presence in our own minds.
- The more people get used to travel, the lesser it is used as a status vehicle. Prestige potential disappears with the frequency of exposure. As holiday travel becomes a social prerequisite, its capacity to offer differential advantage in status terms becomes more limited. The other side is that not to undertake holiday travel is to fail to meet an accepted, cultural norm and there is also the implied assumption that the vacation will be taken at a location that meets fashionable approval (Voase, 1995:70-71).

Resnick (1991:119) and Anderton (1995:12-22), lists various motivators that determine travel choices:



- Physical motivators determine the need to reduce tension through rest, sport, entertainment, hiking, and activities particularly about the music, art, religion and folklore of the place.
- Cultural motivators, which are related to the impulse to learn about a new place, the people and their behaviour.
- Interpersonal motivators have to do with making new friends, meeting different people and getting away from everyday friends and family.
- Status and prestige-related motivators involve the need for recognition from others and the need to improve oneself.

The second individual factor, namely perception, will now be discussed.

#### **3.2.1.2. Perception**

Perception is a process by which individuals organise and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their environment. Perception is important because people's behaviour is based on their perception of reality, and not on reality itself. As a result of this errors and distortions are common (Terry, 2001 and Bennett, 1998:96 and Fridgen, 1991:32-33).

Marx and van der Walt (1993:80), defines perception as the process whereby individuals select, organise and integrate stimuli into a meaningful and coherent overall picture. The sensory stimuli of perception involve the senses that are

relayed to the brain like smell, taste, hearing, sight and touch. It often happens that an individual will receive conflicting stimuli simultaneously, which leads to ignorance or distortion of unwelcome stimuli, which are used to protect an individual. Any deficiency in an individual's senses is considered to be a psychological limitation of that individual's perception.

Perception also refers to the way in which messages are interpreted from our senses to provide some order and meaning to the individual's environment, and it is also a process through which individuals receive, organise and interpret information from their environment (Kotler et al., 1996:196-197). The most important issue involved with perception is the interpretation of information from the individual's senses. Every individual interprets information differently, which provides for individual differences in behavioural activities. Overall, perception is a product of our socialization, culture, existing classification schemes, personality, beliefs, values, motives, morals and expectations. This includes our physical characteristics and environmental experiences (USC, 2001).

Perception may be influenced by internal and external factors. Internal factors include personality, self-concept and the way an individual classify and organise information. External factors include objects, people or events. These factors influence perception, and perceptual distortions may result from it. These distortions are often caused by the methods used to process sensory information, where an individual will attend to certain information while ignoring other allegedly irrelevant information. The allegedly irrelevant information becomes classified as irrelevant because it suits the individual to perceive it as irrelevant at that stage. Some of the major perceptual distortions include

stereotyping, the halo effect and the self-fulfilling prophecy. Stereotyping refers to a way of forming consistent impressions about other people by assuming that they all have common characteristics. The halo effect refers to the process of allowing one characteristic of a person to overshadow all other characteristics of that individual. The self-fulfilling prophecy occurs when a person expects another person to behave in a particular way and that individual acts as expected. These perceptual distortions are not only applicable to individuals but also related to objects and other things (USC, 2001).

#### 3.2.1.3. Learning ability

Du Plessis & Rousseau (1999:208), defines learning ability from a marketing perspective, as the process by which individuals acquire the purchase, consumption knowledge and experience they apply to future-related behaviour. The important aspect in this definition is that consumer learning is a learning process that constantly develops and changes as a result of newly gathered knowledge and experience. This serves as feedback to the consumers and becomes the foundation upon which they will base similar situations in future. This is the difference between learning and instinctive behaviour. Marx & van der Walt (1993:81) and Fridgen (1991:70-74), define learning ability as a combination of motivation, attention, experience and repetition through which the consumer learns which product attributes relates to which brand and where it may be purchased.

Mowen & Minor (1998:107), states that people learn in the consumer environment and that learning may take place through education. This involves obtaining information in an effort to seek data. Learning then takes place through



experience by gaining knowledge through actual contact with products, which is generally a more effective means to gain consumer knowledge.

Different types of learned behaviour exist (Loudon & Bitta, 1993:387-388):

- Physical behaviour is learnt when responding to a variety of situations faced with in every day life. Consumers learn that it is expected to respond in a specific way in a specific situation, for instance, if a guest is given a superior or inferior room, he will either respond in a positive or negative manner.
- Symbolic learning and problem solving. Individuals learn symbolic meanings that enable highly efficient communication, where symbols allow marketers to communicate with consumers through such media as brand names, slogans and signs. Problem solving involves the ability of consumers to mentally evaluate a number of products without having to purchase them. A destination can for instance be branded as an outback adventure for outdoor lovers or for instance as an exquisite diving paradise in tropical waters.
- Affective learning is where consumers learn their own needs and wants and what specific product will satisfy these needs for example, if a tourist want a sun-and-sea holiday, they would visit a coastal destination such as Cape Town, Durban or Port Elizabeth for instance.

The strength of learning may however, be affected by importance, reinforcement and repetition (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 1999:216-217). The more important it is for the consumer to learn about the specific product, the more

effective and efficient will the consumer's learning process be. Reinforcement has an impact on the speed at which the learning occurs and the duration of its effect. The outcome after use increases the likelihood that a specific behaviour will be repeated in future in response to a particular cue or stimulus (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999:869-870). Repetition of information or a message increases the speed and strength of learning and is related to importance. The more important the message, the fewer the repetitions needed.

From the above mentioned definitions, it is clear that learning is a process that evolves over time and cannot be directly observed. Each time an individual perceives new stimuli in the environment, the individual acquires new information that is integrated with existing knowledge. Therefore, learning reflects both current and background characteristics. Learning allows consumers to store large quantities of information over time, which is used to make decisions about which product to buy. A marketer may provide the necessary information to encourage a desired behaviour, but consumers use a variety of learned knowledge to evaluate products (Wells & Prensky, 1996:288-289).

Marx and van der Walt (1993:81), lists the following as important learning principles when formulating a marketing message:

- Repetition reinforces the message.
- An ease to understand and learn the message.
- Promises of rewards or threats of punishment facilitate learning.
- Serious fear-producing messages are avoided.
- A unique message is best remembered.



#### 3.2.1.4. Attitude

The Oxford dictionary (2001:28), simply defines attitude as 'settled behaviour showing opinion.' Marx and van der Walt (1993:82), defines attitude as 'relatively inflexible tendencies to perceive and act in some consistently favourable or unfavourable manner with regard to a given object or idea.' Attitude determines behavioural patterns as a result of past experiences with products, services, suppliers and marketing messages. Du Plessis & Rousseau (1999:217), defines attitude as 'a learned disposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to a given object, subject, idea or behaviour.' These definitions confirm the fact that attitude is a learned experience, which implies that the consumer is not born with an attitude, but it is formed through the learning process. The word consistently is also of great importance to the marketer as it may be expected that the consumer will keep on buying the same product for at least the immediate future (Fridgen, 1991:43-46).

Attitudes have several important characteristics (Loudon & Bitta, 1993:423-424):

- Attitudes have an object. The object must be a physical thing such as a product or action and may either be one item or a specific collection or group of items. Furthermore, the object may be general or specific.
- Attitudes have direction, degree and intensity. An attitude expresses how an individual feels about a product and it shows direction by feeling favourable

or unfavourable towards the product, the degree of like or dislike, and the level of intensity of how strong the individual feels about his or her conviction.

- Attitudes have structure, are stable and generalisable. The centre of the structure of attitudes is the individual's values and self-concept, and they do not stand in isolation. This implies a certain degree of consistency, and because attitude cluster into a structure, they tend to show stability over time. Also, because attitudes are learned, they tend to become stronger the longer they are held. Thus, newly formed attitudes are easier to change and less stable. Regarding the generalisability of attitudes, a consumer's attitude toward a specific object tends to generalise toward a class of objects, the reason for this being to simplify the consumer's decision making.
- Attitudes are learned as they develop from our personal experiences with reality as well as from information from friends, relatives, the media and sales people in a direct and indirect manner.

It is important for the product owner to recognise the factors that influence the extent to which attitudes predict behaviour (Ritchie & Goeldner, 1994:116). Litvin & MacLaurin (2001:821), state that behavioural intent is a consequence of attitude. Mowen & Minor (1998:263) list the following factors to be decisive:

- Involvement of the consumer. Attitudes are likely to predict behaviour only under conditions of high involvement when the learning hierarchy operates.

- Attitude measurement. The longer the time between attitude measurement and the time of behaviour, the weaker the relationship.
- Effects of other people. The desire of other people towards the product and the consumer's motivation to comply with these desires influence the extent to which attitudes predict behaviour.
- Situational factors. These factors include situations such as holidays, time pressures and sickness, and may intervene to such an extent that measured attitudes fail to predict behaviour well.
- Effects of other brands. A consumer will probably purchase the brand that is favoured by the individual him/herself.
- Attitude strength. For an attitude to influence behaviour, it must be held with sufficient strength and conviction to be activated.

From the above mentioned the following question arises: May attitude be changed? From the definition it has already been established that attitudes are relatively consistent and do not change on a regular basis. This does not imply that attitude cannot be changed, but marketers may aim specifically at changing attitudes. The marketer should attempt to reshape the knowledge and beliefs of the market segment to make consumers feel better about the product and when introduced to it, they will try it. It is easier to change attitudes than needs as needs are more enduring, internalized and ingrained (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 1999:229-230 and Gomez-Jacinto et al., 1999:1024-1025).



If a marketer asks the consumers how much they like something, the answer will reveal their attitude towards the product. Once an attitude is formed, it is stored in the long term memory and retrieved on an appropriate occasion to help the individual to deal with an issue or problem. In this situation the individual uses attitudes to interact more effectively in the environment (Mowen & Minor, 1993:423-424). Wells & Prenskey (1996:325-326), names three common methods of measuring attitudes:

- Observation of behaviour which is used to research supplements rather than a sole method of measuring attitude;
- Qualitative investigations which include focus groups, depth interviews and psychological tests;
- Attitude scales by means of survey questionnaires.

Marketers may change attitude by influencing any of the three major components- knowledge, evaluation and predisposition to act. Researchers have discovered that consumers typically try to keep the above-mentioned components with one another. When consumers find themselves inconsistent, they will gather additional information that enables them to modify their beliefs or evaluations in order to restore some measure of consistency (Wells & Prenskey, 1996:336).

### 3.2.1.5. Personality

It is very important to understand why customers choose the types of travel experience they do. What are the psychological pulls that determine how people spend their time and money on travel? Travel researchers (AIIT, 2000) devoted a great deal of time and money to these questions, and demographic information alone cannot account for a product preference, when in blindfold tests consumers cannot distinguish one product from another. It is generally agreed that consumers' personality traits influence their perceptions and buying behaviour, but two conflicting points prevail. One holds that personality traits are the dominant force in determining behaviour, overpowering any external influences, while the opposite contention is that the situational environment is the key-determining factor. It is a very difficult task to pinpoint the exact reason for behaviour and only extensive research may support either contention (AIIT, 2000 and Fridgen, 1991:58-63).

### 3.2.1.6. Life-style and /or personality

Cooper et al. (1999:35-37), Johnson & Thomas (1994:15-24), Bennett, (1998:83-89), Plog (1991:64), and Voase (1995:59 -60), approach tourist behaviour by identifying different types of life-styles and/or personalities and behaviour. There is a large number of typologies in tourism roles and this is partly because there are varying purposes of classification, but it also reflects the fact that typology is subject to limitations which mean that no one typology has become used universally (Aronsson, 2000:67-72 and Hall & Lew, 1998:150-151).



#### 3.2.1.6.1. Typology 1

The author, Erik Cohen, found that primitive humans only left their residence when forced to by extreme circumstances, while modern people are not completely attached to their surroundings any more, and may adapt to new environments (Plog, 1991:64-68). They are interested in habits and cultures different from their own. A new value originated: the experience of novelty and strangeness. The tourist seeks these two elements, but shrinks back when the experience becomes too strange. Most tourists need something familiar, something that reminds them of home (e.g. food or a newspaper). Tourism is directed to combine novelty and familiarity. In other words, the modern tourist wants to join the safety of old habits to the excitement of new changes.

#### 3.2.1.6.2. Typology 2

The following is an extract from Plog (1991:64-73), where a total of one thousand six hundred personal interviews, lasting forty five to sixty minutes each, were completed in thirteen metropolitan centres around the USA and Canada:

"Two types of persons were identified: A psychocentric is a self inhibited, non-adventuresome person. The word is based on "psyche" referring to the self and "centric" meaning the centering of much of one's thoughts or concerns on the small problems in one's daily life. An allocentric refers to the word "allo" in Latin, which means varied in form (that is, someone whose interest patterns are rich and varied). "Centric" refers to the centering of personal interests on a

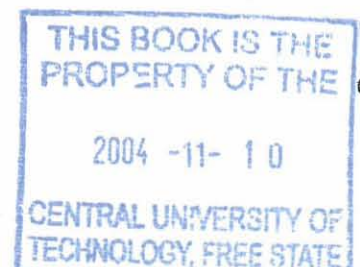
broad diversity of pursuits and challenges. Table 3.2 presents a summary of some of the distinguished characteristics of the two personality types." This typology is also supported in Pearce & Butler (1993:123-128).

Table 3.2. Characteristics of psychocentric and allocentric personalities.

PSYCHO	ALLO
<p>Intellectually restricted</p> <p>Low risk taking</p> <p>Withhold income</p> <p>Use well known brands</p> <p>Territory bound</p> <p>Non-active life-style</p> <p>Non-adventurous</p> <p>Prefer the familiar in travel destinations</p> <p>Non activity level</p> <p>Prefer driving</p> <p>Prefer familiar atmosphere</p> <p>Prefer complete tour packaging</p> <p>Travel less</p> <p>Little interest in other countries</p> <p>Expects foreigners to speak in English</p> <p>Buys souvenirs and common items</p> <p>Prefer returning to some familiar places</p>	<p>Curious</p> <p>Moderate risk taking</p> <p>Use disposable income</p> <p>Try new products</p> <p>Exploring</p> <p>Interested involved</p> <p>Adventurous</p> <p>Prefer non-tourist areas</p> <p>High activity level</p> <p>Prefer flying</p> <p>Enjoy meeting strange / foreign cultures</p> <p>Like freedom and flexibility</p> <p>Travel more</p> <p>Curious about the world</p> <p>Will learn phrases of other languages</p> <p>Buys native arts/crafts</p> <p>Different for each trip</p>

Source: Johnson & Thomas (1994:16)

Another project (Johnson & Thomas, 1994:17) based on one thousand two hundred, forty-five minute telephone interviews, with people who had sufficient income to travel, produced five basic travel motives:



- To add interest and excitement to one's life (30 percent)- perhaps especially true for people whose work-a-day world is not as challenging as they would like.
- To add a sense of self discovery (4 percent) or a sense of finding one's self the search for the meaning of life, and wonder about one's position in the universe. Contact with foreign cultures may help one gain perspective.
- A chance to unwind and relax (29 percent) - busy people simply want to get away to some exchanging place where they may slow down and "smell the roses".
- Ego support (4 percent) - travel provides reassurance to air bruised egos, which are confronted daily by different people and situations that challenge air basic concepts of self-worth.
- Life is too short (32 percent) - the idea that every individual faces up to their own mortality.

#### 3.2.1.6.3. Typology 3

The researchers, Perreault and Dardens (Johnson & Thomas, 1994:18), mailed a questionnaire to two thousand households. The head of the household was asked to complete it, consulting other members of the family when necessary. The three parts in the questionnaire were:



- Questions about vacation travel behaviour;
- Questions about socio-economic characteristics of the household, and;
- Questions about activities, interests and opinions on both leisure time and vacation activities and general behaviour.

The response was over forty percent, and produced evidence of five distinct groups of vacation orientation:

- Budget tourists (28 percent). Their major interests are economy-oriented (high interest in camping) and they have medium income.
- Adventurers (24 percent) exhibit a low desire for relaxing travel and a relatively high disposition for venturesomeness. They are relatively money-orientated in their travel. They are well educated and have a high income.
- Homebodies (20 percent) enjoy relaxing travel, but have no interest in vacation travel and are not venturesome. They do not share vacation talk with others and have good incomes.
- Vacationers (7 percent) are the antithesis of the homebodies. They plan ahead more but are undecided about their vacations, although they think about it a lot. They are active and are employed in lower-paid jobs.
- Moderates (21 percent) are rather unremarkable in the main. They have a high predisposition to travel, but are not interested in weekend travel or



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- Moderates (21 percent) are rather unremarkable in the main. They have a high predisposition to travel, but are not interested in weekend travel or

sports. They resemble the vacationers, with the difference that they have no active life-style.

#### 3.2.1.6.4. Typology 4

The Westvlaams Ekonomisch Studie Bureau interviewed a sample of three thousand Belgian adults about their demographic and socio-economic characteristics and about their behaviour and expenditure during their holidays, and the following clusters were formed (Johnson & Thomas, 1994:15-24):

- Active sea lovers (5,5 percent). The most important factor to this group is the presence of sea and a beach.
- Contract-mined holiday makers (9,5 percent) attach great importance to hospitable reception, to "making time for each other" and "making contact with new people".
- The Nature viewers (12 percent) prefer visiting landscapes.
- Rest seekers (25,8 percent) require the holiday to be peaceful and restful.

#### 3.2.1.6.5. Typology 5

The researcher, Dalen, interviewed a sample of three thousand adults (Johnson & Thomas, 1994:28-30). Seven hundred and fifty questions on social change were asked to individuals. The respondents were asked about their beliefs

about how to live and their objectives in life. This divided the group into four segments:

- The modern materialists demand the sun and do not care about skin cancer. They love nightclubs and wild parties where they may meet new people. They are more concerned about beverages than food. Superficial entertainment, sex, action and excitement are important ingredients of a holiday.
- The modern idealists demand excitement and entertainment, but are more intellectual. Atmosphere, ambience and good friends are important. Art, culture, new destinations and experiences are a must. They do not like mass tourism or fixed programmes.
- The traditional idealists demand quality, nature, cultures, history, famous places, peace, quiet and safety. They prefer packaged tours and visiting family and friends.
- The traditional materialists are always on the lookout for low prices and special offers. They want traditional mass tourism and package tours. They are afraid of being left alone and have a strong need for personal security.

#### 3.2.1.6.6. Typology 6

The Gallup Organisation interviewed more than four thousand tourists over eighteen and five distinct groups of tourists were identified (Johnson & Thomas, 1994:21-22):

- **Adventurers:** This group is independent, confident and they like new adventures, different cultures and to meet new people. They are better educated and travel plays a central role in their lives. They are predominantly male and younger than other tourists.
- **Worriers:** They experience anxiety from the perceived stresses of travel, have little confidence in their ability and are generally afraid to fly. They are less educated and less affluent. This category travels the least of the five groups and are predominantly female and rather older than other tourists.
- **Dreamers:** They are intrigued with the idea of travel and the meaning it may bring to their lives. They read and talk a lot about destinations and are often more oriented towards relaxation than adventure. They have a modest income and education category and are usually women aged fifty and over.
- **Economists:** Travel provides them with a routine outlet for relaxation and is not seen as an experience that adds meaning to their lives. They seek value in travel and they do not think it is worth paying for extra amenities and services, even if they may afford them. They are more likely to be men than women, have an average income level and a slightly below average education.
- **Indulgers:** They are generally willing to pay for additional comfort. They stay in large hotels and like to be pampered and are equally divided between men and women.



then a destination may match its strengths to the visitors' needs and the benefits sought (Hotel-online, 2000).

Chacko (Hotel-online, 2000), in his study on positioning of tourism destinations describes the following types of positioning strategies (Hotel-online, 2000 and Bennett (1998:205-206):

- Psychological positioning, which is a strategy employed to create a unique product image with the objective of creating interest and attracting visitors. Psychological positioning may be subdivided into objective and subjective positioning.

- **Objective positioning**

The organisation tries to tailor its services and products to the needs and desires of the target market(s) selected. The emphasis is on adding to or modifying one or more of the objective characteristics of the product or services. It is concerned almost entirely with the objective attributes of the physical product (Bennett, 1998:205-206). This means creating an image of the destination that reflects its physical characteristics and functional features to differentiate it from the competition. Less successful objective positioning occurs when the feature is not unique.

- **Subjective positioning**

Refers to the image of the destination and not to the physical aspects of the destination. It is rather other attributes perceived

Baloglu & McCleary (1999:868), in their study on a model of destination image formation found that a destination's image is formed both by stimulus factors and tourists' characteristics. Having researched the individual factors that may possibly influence consumers, the influence of group factors will now be discussed.

### 3.2.2. Group factors

Marx and van der Walt (1998:83), lists five group factors that influence group behaviour:

#### **3.2.2.1. The family**

Each member of the family has an influence on behaviour patterns. The important aspects in this regard are the specific phase in the family lifecycle and the role differentiation and influences exerted by family members on each other (Seaton & Bennett, 1996:63-64).

For the marketer, the term family also includes the term household, even though differences exist in the meanings of the terms (Loudon & Bitta, 1993:223, Mowen & Minor, 1999:522-524 and Du Plessis & Rousseau, 1999:308-309). A family is a group related by blood, marriage, or adoption, which functions together as a unit. Households include individuals living together or alone but who function as a social and economic unit.

Family buying behaviour represents a form of collective decision-making where more than one member of the unit is involved in the decision-making process. Each member plays a different role in the process, being it to gather information or being the decision-maker. The decision made may be consensual where mutual agreement was reached, or accommodative where differences in opinion are experienced. The family will proceed through the different stages in the family life cycle from the young bachelor stage to the single solitary survivor stage. The needs of the family will change over time, depending on the specific stage that the family is in (Wells & Prensky, 1996:217-220).

#### 3.2.2.2. Reference group

This refers to any group against which a person may evaluate his behaviour patterns as there are distinctive norms of behaviour in each group. It is also expected of members to conform to these norms to avoid sanctions applied against them (Lazer & Layton, 1999:117).

Reference groups are composed of those people a consumer chooses to provide guidelines for his or her behaviour, and are often people with whom the consumer shares other background characteristics such as cultural values, demographic subcultures or lifestyles (Wells & Prensky, 1996:220). Consumers choose those reference groups that provide them with information, the power, resources and the image they may use to complete the consumer purchase activities.

Different types of reference groups may be identified (Loudon & Bitta, 1993:205 and Du Plessis & Rousseau, 1999:304-306):

- Membership groups are those to which an individual belongs, and may in some cases be automatic by virtue of age, sex, culture, education or marital status.
- Aspirational groups are groups, which the individual anticipates joining at some time in future, and with which the individual has direct contact and may be either symbolic or anticipatory.
- Primary groups are those in which interpersonal relationships take place on an intimate, face-to-face and frequent basis.
- Secondary groups are characterized by impersonal and formalized relationships. Informal groups refer to family or sport groups and formal groups may include colleagues and church groups.

Reference groups may furthermore be classified in terms of whether they attract or repel an individual. A positive reference group will attract whereas a negative group will most probably be avoided based on the dislike.

#### 3.2.2.3. Opinion leaders

Loudon & Bitta (1993:266-267) and Kinnear (1995:199) define opinion leaders as those people who are able, in a given situation, to exert personal influence. They are the ones to whom individuals look for advice and information. These are usually people of high status who make major decisions for the rest of society.



Furthermore, Loudon & Bitta (1993:266-267), and Du Plessis & Rousseau, (1999:317), list the following characteristics for opinion leaders:

- They have approximately the same social class position as non-leaders although they may have higher social status within the class.
- They have greater exposure to mass media that are relevant to their area of interest.
- They have greater interest and knowledge of the area of influence than do non-leaders.
- They are more sociable or companionable than non-leaders.
- They have more innovativeness than do non-leaders.
- They are more familiar with and loyal to standards and values than non-leaders.
- They appear to exhibit the personality trait of public individuality, which is a state in which they feel differentiated to some degree from other people and choose to act differently from them.

#### 3.2.2.4. Social class

Social classes are, according to Mowen & Minor, (1998:605-606), the relatively permanent strata, in a society that differ in status, wealth, education,

possessions, and values. All societies possess a hierarchical structure that stratifies residents into classes of people. Both actual and perceptual factors distinguish the groups from each other. Members of one class tend to socialise with members of the same class. The three primary factors that differentiate social class are (Mowen & Minor, 1998:605-606 and Seaton & Bennett, 1996:61-62):

- Economic status. This is influenced by occupation, wealth, house-type and location.
- Education, qualifications and credentials.
- Behavioural standards. This is characterised by community participation, aspirations and recreational habits.

Loudon & Bitta (1993:169), argue that people buy products for what they mean as well as for what they may do. Products and services are seen to have personal and social meaning in addition to their purely functional purpose. Therefore some consumers purchase items that they do not really need so that others may see what they have done. These things that they buy are symbols of status telling others who they are and what their social class is.

#### **3.2.2.5. Cultural groups**

Culture is transmitted from generation to generation and consists of a complex system of values, norms and symbols, which have developed in a society over a

period of time and in which all its members share. The main existing subcultures are nationality, religion, race and geographical area of residence (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 1999:328).

Du Plessis & Rousseau (1999:329), names four characteristics that are common to all cultural values:

- Cultural values are learned behaviour from childhood.
- They serve as guidelines to behaviour and are passed down from one generation to another.
- Cultural values are permanent as they are passed down from the parents to the children, but these values are also dynamic in that certain values may change over time.
- Cultural values are socially shared. Each culture has certain values that differentiate it from other cultures.

Mowen & Minor (1996:486-490), list five basic means through which groups affect consumers:

- Groups influence processes. The reference group discussed in paragraph 3.2.2.2 has the most impact on consumers through norms, information and needs. Norms are unwritten laws recognised as standards of behaviour for the group.

- The creation of roles within the group. Role refers to specific behaviour that is expected of a person in a certain position.
- The development of conformity pressures. This takes place where a change in behaviour or belief takes place as a result of real or imagined group pressure. Conformity may be either compliance where the individual conforms to the wishes of the group, or provides acceptance where the individual changes his/her beliefs in the direction of the group.
- Social-comparison process. It is another way through which an individual will assess his/her opinion and abilities by comparing himself/herself to others to evaluate the correctness of the opinions.
- The development of group polarisation. This is also referred to as a group shift, where the tendency was proved that when individuals and groups were presented with decision dilemmas, groups tended to select the riskier alternative.

Consumers are influenced in many ways in their everyday life: internally, externally, individually and through group factors. The focus will furthermore be specifically on the tourist and his/her holiday decision.



### 3.3. THE TOURIST'S HOLIDAY DECISION

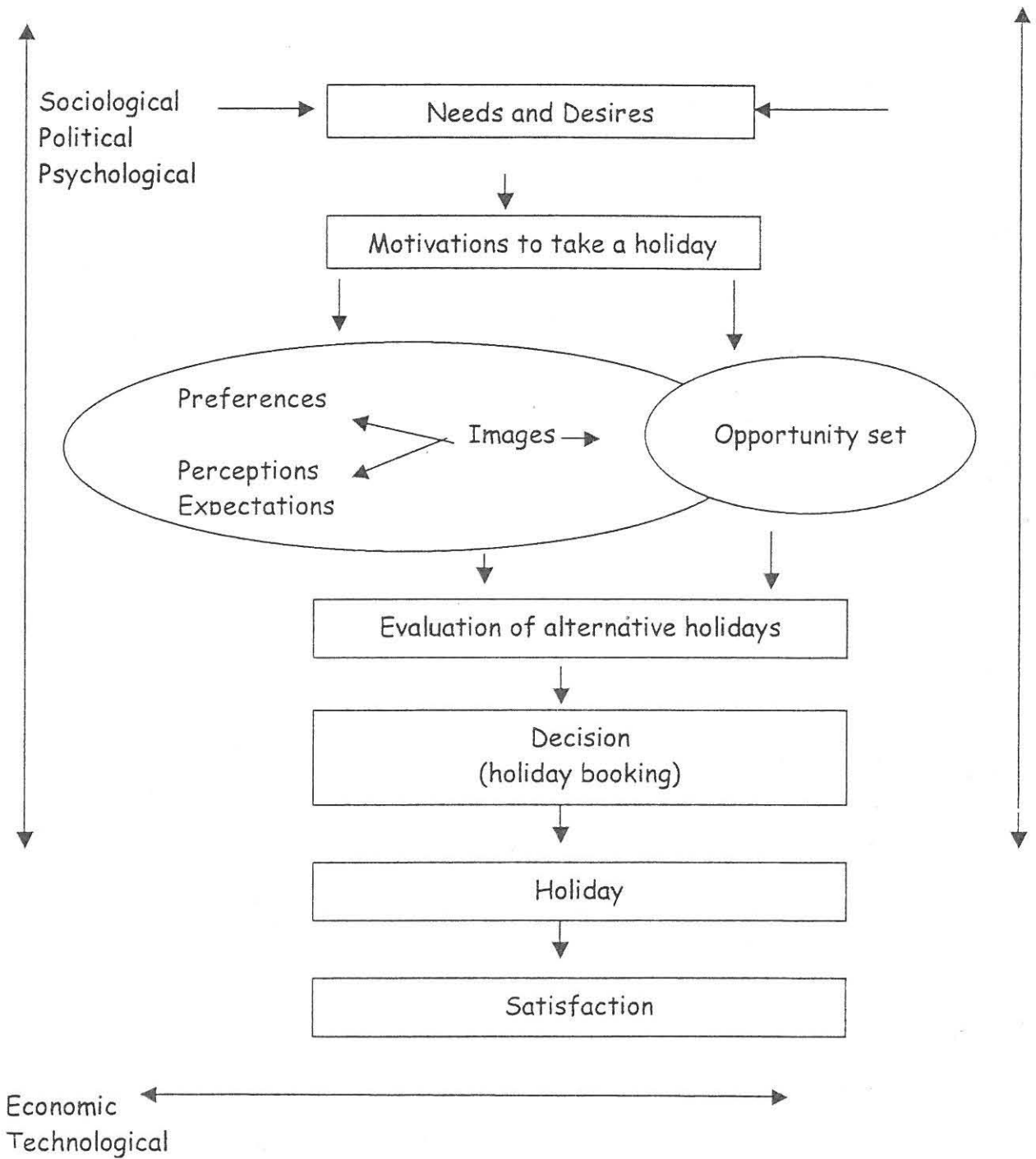
The decision-making process is a creative process by which the decision maker understands the criteria involved, looks for attributes, adds, combines, and possibly reduces, the number of criteria, and accordingly modifies the attributes. The decision-making process will start ambiguously, with some initial alternatives and criteria. In an attempt to reduce ambiguity, attributes are introduced, the criteria refined, and the attribute mappings take shape. Contradictions and conflicts will naturally surface. Through these contradictions, the reasons for the decision-maker's criteria become clear and some new criteria may be revealed. Thus, the decision-making process is about establishing the mappings between alternatives and attributes, and between attributes and criteria (Waikato, 2000).

Middleton (1994:53), supports the classical models of buyer behaviour which operate on the well-tested assumption that buying decisions (demand) are primarily governed by price. All other things being equal, the lower the price, the higher the volume of demand and vice versa. Pellinen (2000:1 - 3, 10-11), researched decision-making in Lapland tourism enterprises, and came to the conclusion that the essential notable factors and logic of decision-making are considered to change at any given time in accordance to the experience and other qualities of the decision-maker and the dominating situation at the time of making the decision. His conclusion according to the research was that decision-making often takes place in co-operation with the product owners or intermediaries, and that most decisions are price sensitive, depending on the specific quality of the tourism product.

In Figure 3.3, Bennett, (1998:73), illustrates the tourist's holiday decision, based on needs and desires with all the external factors and the influence of these on the final decision. Listed below are the three main categories that may influence the holiday decision:

- The dynamic, changing **environment** influences an individual's needs, aspirations and desires over which the individual has no control;
- The **motivation** factor that stems from these needs and desires;
- The **decision-making** process starts with the collection of information, and ends with the assessment of the travel experience.

Figure 3.3. The tourist's holiday decision



Source: Bennett (1998:73)

Figure 3.4 illustrates the influence of internal and external factors on the tourist's holiday decision. The external factors are those over which the tourist has little or no control such as health problems, the climate and availability of suitable products, while on the other hand, the internal factors are all closely related to the individual. These factors include things like hobbies, lifestyle and income.



**Figure 3.4. Factors influencing the holiday decision**



Source: Swarbrooke & Horner (1999:74)

The question is now, what makes a tourist's decision so important, and which factors influence the holiday decision? Laws (1991:61), gives the following reasons for travel decisions being important:

- Tourists obtain no financial return on their investment except in the case of business travel.
- Travel or holiday purchases typically account for a high portion of disposable income.
- The majority of travel purchases are planned rather than spontaneous.
- Savings often have to be planned for a travel purchase.
- Tourists visit the site of production where the product or service may be experienced (the tourism product is intangible). Distance may be regarded as a utility (visit the destination).

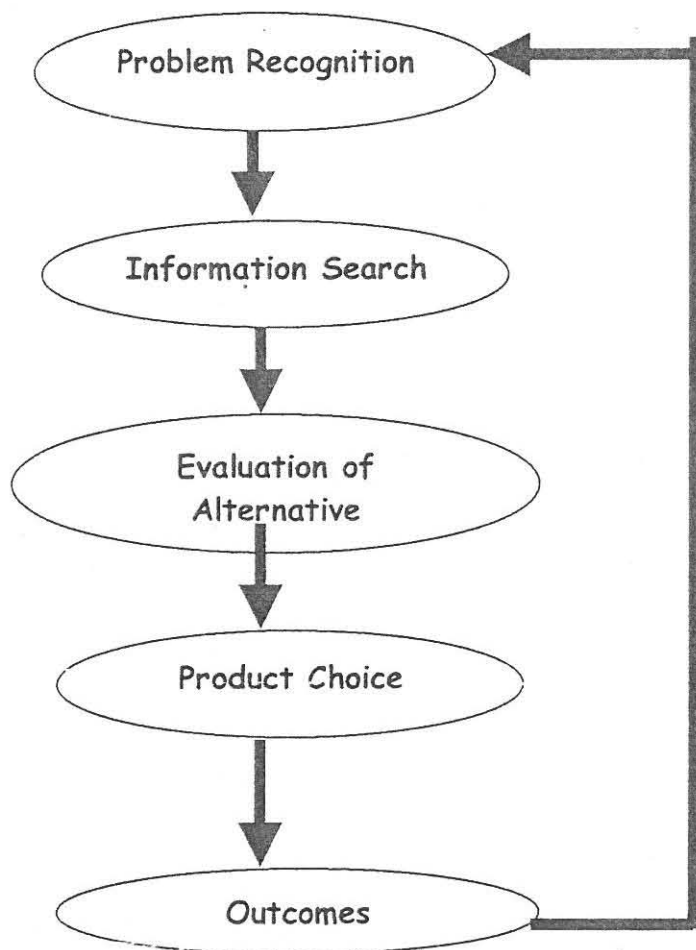
Once the consumer or tourist has made a holiday decision, the next step in the process would be how to obtain or experience the chosen product.

### 3.4. THE STEPS IN THE BUYING PROCESS

Behavioural scientists have long studied how human beings make decisions, and in our turbulent environment the ability to successfully view one's current situation

through traditional 'good judgment' is weakened by a multitude of internal- and external sources. The changing paradigms of how we think about social, cultural, economic and other issues, create a skew perception of what is really happening. There are various pitfalls that individuals may encounter when making decisions, so techniques (steps) have been invented to help (SDSG, 2000 and Pearce et al., 1998:84-86). Figure 3.5 demonstrates the steps in the decision-making process.

Figure 3.5. The steps in the decision-making process



Source: UKY, (2000)

Although buying motivation is complex, when faced with a decision, a consumer goes through a five stage process UKY (2000), Resnick (1991:115-117), Lazer & Layton (1999:102-103) and Kinnear et al. (1995:180):

- Recognising a need or desire (problem recognition);
- Seeking information;
- Placing values on products (evaluation of alternatives);
- Deciding whether to buy (product choice);
- Experiencing and evaluating purchase (outcomes).

According to AIIT, (2000) and Lazer & Layton, (1999:136), five similar stages in the decision-making process are identified from the above-mentioned, and they include:

- Recognition of an unsatisfied need;
- Identification of alternative ways of achieving satisfaction;
- Evaluation of alternatives;
- Purchase decisions;
- Post purchase behaviour.

#### 3.4.1. Recognising a need or desire

The whole buying process starts off with the recognition of a need or desire which comes from internal and external sources. The consumer becomes aware that he/she must travel or wants to travel. Needs and desires produce tension which is released when the needs and desires are satisfied. These needs and



desires become motivators requiring action to release the tension, and they also determine what types of benefits will be sought (Resnick, 1991:115).

Modern technology plays an important role in stimulating need recognition in the tourism industry, according to Bennett (1998:99). Technological advances have brought distant countries closer and the growth in communication systems like television, has broadened the scope of people's interest in other countries and their culture. As communication grows, awareness and interest will also grow. This awareness may develop a desire for a visit.

Recognising a need may lead to a problem if uncertainty exists about satisfying the need. This means understanding that there is uncertainty about a goal (need fulfilment), its achievement or outcome. The need may also differ, depending on the impact of various influencing variables, which could be either individual, environmental or both (Du Plessis et al., 1997:49).

#### 3.4.2. Seeking information

The next step for the individual is to seek information about the product(s) he/she intends to buy. Personal knowledge and external sources may be referred to, as well as past experiences and referrals from family, friends or the media. When personal knowledge is insufficient to determine whether the product will fulfil certain needs, external sources of information are consulted, which include travel agents, books, magazines, newspapers, videos, internet, or any other source that gives information about travel products (Kinnear et al., 1995:181).

When gathering information, people look for products that seem likely to satisfy their need or desire. They seek information about the tangible and intangible aspects of the product. Once the potential buyer is satisfied with the amount of information obtained, the buying process will continue (Resnick, 1991:115).

Middleton (1994:53-57), states that the consumer's mind may only process information that has been fed into the decision system at the right time, deciding within the limitations of the memory capacity. Even if an ideal product exists and is available but the purchaser is not aware of its existence, then for that consumer the product does not exist. It is also important to take note of the fact that information shown as inputs to buyers are not necessarily received by the consumers as its originators intended. All inputs pass through a process, which serves to suppress most of the available information into highlights with probable distorted reception images. Perception is used to cover the way individuals select and organise the mass of information they are exposed to, and perception is a function of attitudes<sup>4</sup>.

#### 3.4.3. Placing value on products

People's attitudes and beliefs have a strong influence on the value they attach to products and how well they think a certain product may satisfy their needs.

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<sup>4</sup> See paragraph 3.2.1.4.

They place value on the products based on the benefits they will receive on purchasing them by giving each attribute a value and weighing some attributes greater than others. Different people will place a greater value on different product attributes. Placing value on products is often based on **mental images** of a product rather than its tangible features. A positive image results in purchase and use, and a negative image causes a consumer to avoid the product and seek alternatives (Resnick, 1991:115 and Kinnear et al., 1995:183).

At this stage of the process, consumers identify alternative solutions to the need and determine the merits of each. The person has not yet taken a decision, but is merely considering criteria and product references. The consumer may also consider alternative evaluations or decide to postpone a final decision. This is a critical stage as consumers are not always able to make rational decisions by weighing up alternatives due to the fact that the consumers do not know all the products and their benefits well. Sometimes consumers experience a period of uncritical blindness in which they become obsessed with buying the product. At this stage they are not receptive to alternative viewpoints (Du Plessis et al., 1997:52).

In Figure 3.6 Bennett (1998:100), illustrates the evaluation criteria of a product as follows:



Figure 3.6. Product evaluation criteria

PRODUCT CRITERIA	PSYCHOLOGICAL CRITERIA
Cost/Price	Satisfaction and social needs
Quality	Satisfaction of ego needs
Aesthetic qualities	Image of the product/country Contribution of the product to life-style

Source: Bennett (1998:100)

From Figure 3.6 it is clear that the consumer will consider various attributes and benefits of the product before making a decision of which price, quality and aesthetic qualities form the basis of the decision. The consumer will use these mentioned criteria to evaluate whether this product will satisfy the individual's needs or not.

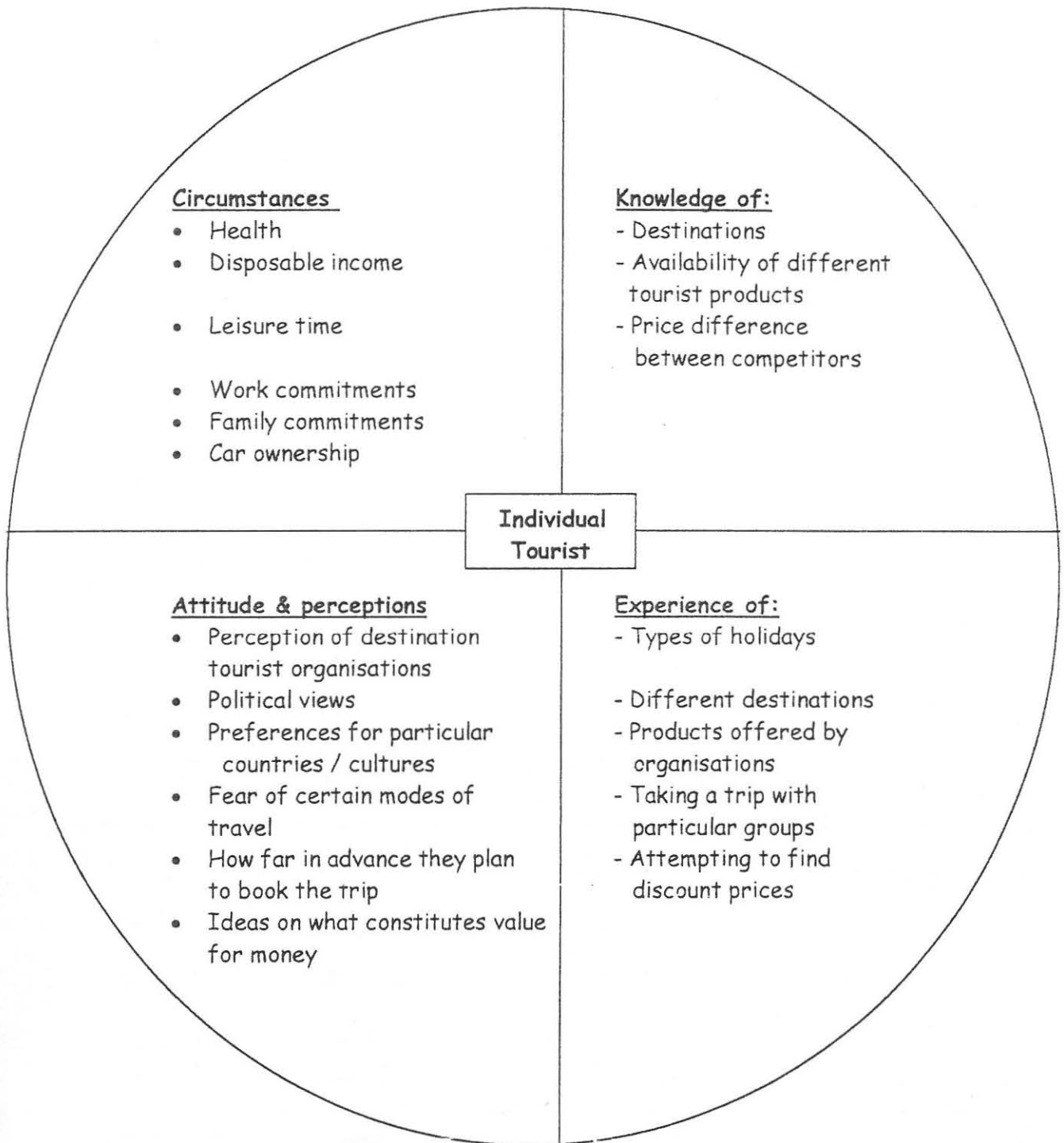
#### 3.4.4. Decision to buy

The decision to buy or not is directly linked to motivation, which in turn is linked to the buyer's psychological make up. The consumer completes the transaction with the purchase of the product. Final decisions are made about where to buy the product, when, and method of payment. Motivation may be influenced by marketing efforts and at this stage the consumer incorporates knowledge and information gained and makes a choice. (Resnick, 1991:117, UKY, 2000 and Lewis et al., 1995:202-205).



Tourist behaviour shows a growing diversity of preferences (Dahles, 1998:65). Swarbrooke & Horner, (1999:63), illustrate in Figure 3.7 the personal determinants of tourist behaviour. This approach lists four main personal determinants that can influence a tourist's decision, namely the personal circumstances of the tourist, the individual's knowledge of the destination, individual attitude and perceptions as well as previous holiday experiences.

Figure 3.7. Personal determinants of tourist behaviour



Source: Swarbrooke & Horner (1999:63)

### 3.4.5. Experiencing and evaluating the purchase

The final step in the buying process is evaluating the purchase to find out if the product satisfies all the needs and lives up to customer expectations. This stage is particularly important in the travel industry and for future marketing. Post-purchase evaluation strongly influences future decision making in the form of possible repeat purchase (Resnick, 1991:117).

During post-purchase evaluation, the customer's decision is evaluated in the light of the actual experience with, or benefits derived from the product. A feeling of dissatisfaction is experienced when the individual perceives a negative difference between the desired and anticipated state of affairs (or benefits gained) and the actual state of affairs (Bennett, 1998:101, Gomez-Jacinto et al., 1999:1025 and Middleton, 1994:57).

Consumers may respond both verbally and through their behaviour to a product bought. A positive response may result in reinforcement of purchase decisions, while negative verbal responses may result in rumours. Behavioural responses usually involve repeat purchases or brand loyalty in the case of satisfaction, complaints or brand switching in the case of dissatisfaction, and inertia or impulse buying in the case of indifference.

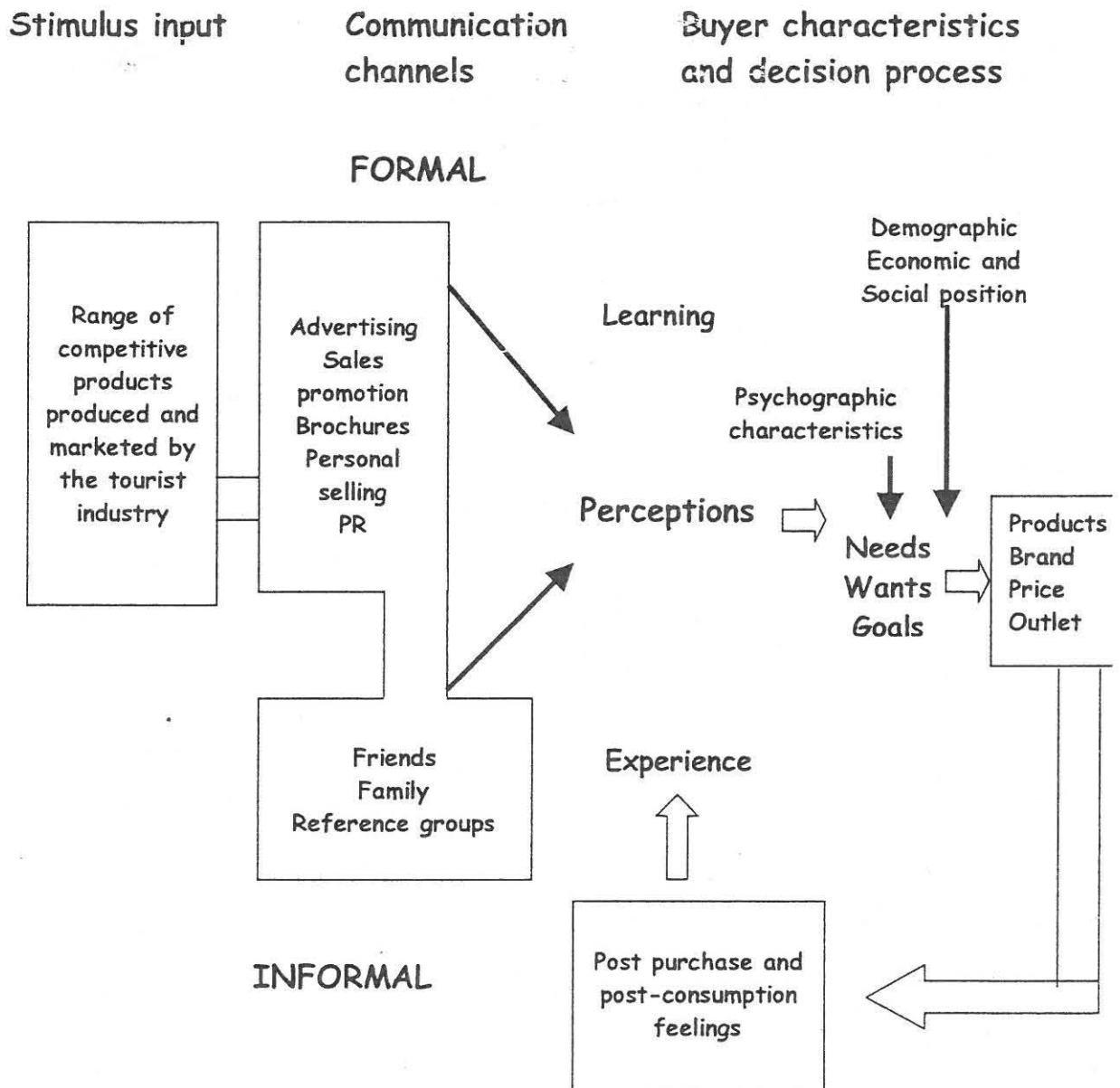
Sometimes consumers experience post-purchase conflict or discomfort about the wisdom of a particular decision. They may then hold illogical views about the brand or service bought and in such cases consumers may wish to reduce such dissonance through cognitive and attitudinal changes. They will find a balance in

their psychological field by seeking supportive information or distorting contradictory information regarding the purchase. This activity is commonly referred to as cognitive dissonance (Du Piessis et al., 1997:54). Middleton (1994:53), illustrates the model of buyer behaviour in Figure 3.8.

The four main components of this model are based on the stimulus input (need), communication channels (information), buyer characteristics and decision process (placing value and deciding to buy), and the purchase output (response). Different products in the market stimulate the need of the tourist. The consumer obtains information either from formal sources such as promotion, selling or brochures, and informal information from friends and other reference groups. The consumer then makes a decision based on his or her perception, previous experience and learning. Apart from these last aspects mentioned, the psychographic characteristics, needs, goals, wants and other external forces also play a role in the decision of the consumer. The consumer then chooses a specific product, brand or price to suit his or her needs the best.



Figure 3.8. Model of buyer behaviour



Source: Middleton (1994:53)

### 3.5. MARKETING IMPLICATIONS OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

It is clear from this chapter that each consumer is a unique individual with different needs and desires. In Mowen & Minor (1998:5-6), the marketing concept is described as a consumer-satisfying process rather than a goods-producing process. The importance of understanding the consumer is found in the definition of marketing as a human activity directed at satisfying needs and wants of consumers. In order to satisfy needs and wants of specific homogeneous groups of tourists, it is imperative to, from a marketing perceptive, undertake careful marketing segmentation and competitive positioning of products. The latter is referring to the image of the product that is created in the eyes of the consumer. Market segmentation, on the other hand, is an attempt to serve groups of consumers with homogeneous needs and wants.

#### 3.5.1. Market segmentation

The travel market as a whole is too large to reach efficiently and too diverse to communicate with in a single way, thus the need to develop travel products for specific groups of people who have things in common. The process by which the total market is divided into groups of potential customers with shared characteristics is known as market segmentation, and the groups themselves are called market segments (Bennett & Strydom, 2001:63-72 and Lickorish, 1994:50-51).

Paul E. Green and Abba M. Kriegler, (2000) describe two techniques that help companies to target their market in their article, namely slicing and dicing the

market. The techniques are firstly, to segment the market in a way that will be useful for marketers, and secondly to optimise the products that will be offered to different segments (Green & Kiegler, 2000 and Bennett, 1998:254-260).

There are several reasons for segmenting the market into smaller sections, of which the primary reasons are the following (DSS, 2000 and Kotler et al., 1996:246-254):

- Marketing is being made easier to smaller groups. It is easier to address the needs of smaller groups of customers in particular as they have many characteristics in common.
- Identification of new or niche segments that are un-served and under-serviced.
- More efficient use of marketing resources may be accomplished by focusing on the best segments for your marketing mix.

Resnick (1991:32), states that technically, each person should be considered a separate target market, defined by unique characteristics and special needs. However, market segmentation groups people who share common characteristics and are therefore likely to have similar needs and desires.

Middleton (1994:76), lists the following as the main methods of segmentation:

- Purpose of travel.

- Buyer needs, motivation and benefits sought.
- Buyer characteristics.
- Demographic, economic, geographic characteristics.
- Psychographic characteristics.
- Geo-demographic characteristics.
- Price.

Kotler et al. (1996:254-255), however lists different requirements for segmentation and states that for market segments to be useful, they must have the following characteristics:

- **Measurability** - The degree to which the market size and purchasing power may be measured, taking into consideration that certain segmentation variables are difficult to measure.
- **Accessibility** - A market segment may be identified without being able to access and serve that particular segment.
- **Substantiality** - This refers to the degree to which segments are large or profitable enough to serve as markets.
- **Actionability** - The degree to which effective programmes may be designed for attracting and serving the segments identified.



DSS Research gives segments the following characteristics (DSS, 2000):

- Big enough to warrant segmenting.
- Difference between members.
- Responsive to the needs of the market.
- Reachable through at least one media.
- Interested in different benefits sought from the product.
- Profits must exceed cost of developing multiple marketing programmes.

Heath & Wall (1992:102), prescribes the following steps in segmenting the tourism market:

- Step 1 is deciding how to divide the tourism market into segments.
- Step 2 is learning about the tourists in each segment.
- Step 3 is deciding which segment to target.

Zikmund & D'Amico (1993:254), Moutinho et al., (1996:151) and Resnick (1991:35) uses various techniques in combination to segment the market, and states that no single way is right or wrong. Figure 3.9 illustrates their method of segmentation.

Figure 3.9. Segmenting the travel market

## TRAVEL AND TOURISM

GEOGRAPHIC	DEMOGRAPHIC	SOCIOECONOMIC	PSYCHAGRAPIC/ LIFESTYLE	BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS	CONSUMPTION PATTERNS	CONSUMER PREDISPOSITION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political boundaries</li> <li>Climatic regions</li> <li>Population boundaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Age</li> <li>Sex</li> <li>Race</li> <li>Ethnicity</li> <li>Marital Status</li> <li>Family size</li> <li>Family life cycle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occupation</li> <li>Education</li> <li>Income</li> <li>Social class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities</li> <li>Interests</li> <li>Opinions</li> <li>Values</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Type of store</li> <li>Time of purchase</li> <li>Number of units purchased</li> <li>Shopping frequency</li> <li>Media habits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequency of use- heavy vs. light usage, unit size</li> <li>Occasion</li> <li>Loyalty to brand</li> <li>Ownership of other products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Product knowledge</li> <li>Benefits sought</li> <li>Consumer problems</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Zikmund & D'Amico (1993: 254)

As illustrated in Figure 3.9, the market may be segmented into the following categories, which will be discussed briefly (Zikmund & D'Amico, 1993:254-271):

- Geographic segmentation includes political boundaries, such as cities, countries and states, climatic differences, population boundaries and other geographic variables. A further distinction may be made between domestic and foreign markets or city and rural areas.
- Demographic segmentation is based on characteristics such as sex, race, marital status, family size and gender. This is one of the most commonly used methods of segmentation.
- Socioeconomic segmentation depends on special demographic characteristics that reflect on the individual's social position or economic standing in society. Factors influencing this type of segmentation are: occupation, income and social class.
- Psychographic and lifestyle segmentation focuses on how an individual spends his/her time and money. An individual's activities, interests, opinions and values represent that person's lifestyle. Quantitative measures of lifestyles are known as psychographics.
- Behaviour segmentation takes place on the basis that different behaviour patterns exist amongst consumers.
- Consumption pattern segmentation is based upon the fact that the same product's consumption may vary from heavy use to no use, and these patterns form a basis for segmentation.

- Consumption predisposition segmentation is embedded in the fact that consumers vary widely with respect to product knowledge, beliefs about products and brands, and reasons for purchase.

The international tourism market is highly segmented and from the above mentioned, it is clear that no specific segmentation can be prescribed. Each market will have to be evaluated and researched individually (Williams & Shaw, 1998:132).

#### 3.5.1.1 Psychographic segmentation

This type of segmenting, also called 'personality traits segmenting', is used to group people according to their psychological make-up. The psychological make-up consists of their values, attitudes, personalities, activities, life-style and interests and provides a richer portrait of consumer groups (Cooper, et al., 1999:42, Gartner, 1996:427-429 and Middleton, 1994:80).

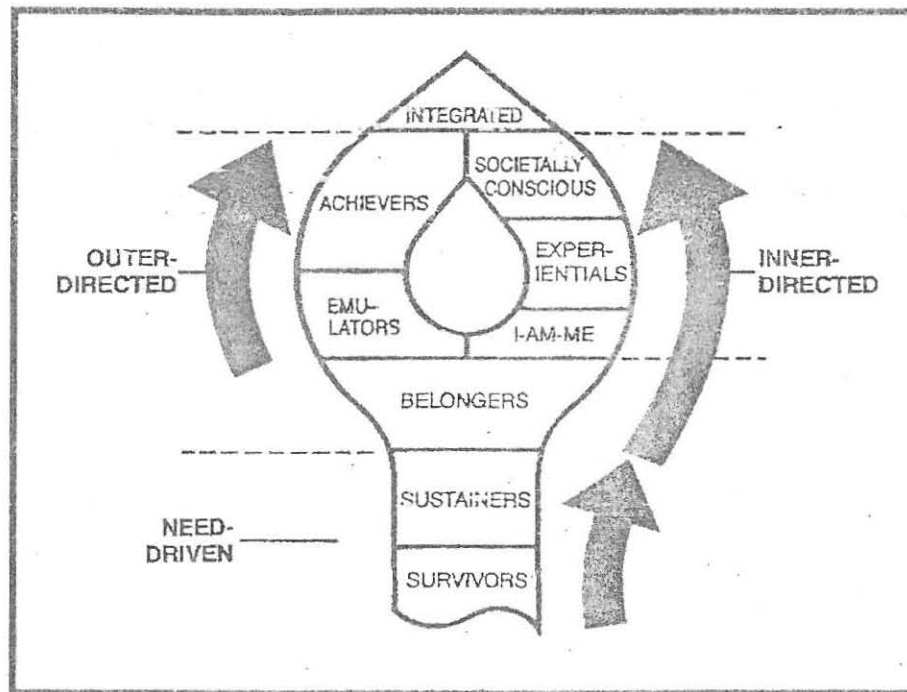
People from the same subculture, social class and even occupation may have different life-styles and it is thus the opinion of Kotler et al. (1996:190), that life-style studies capture something more than the consumer's social class or personality. They profile the person's whole pattern of acting and interacting in the world. According to Kotler, the focus of psychographic segmentation should not be solely on life-style but also on social class. The former states that social class has a strong effect on preferences for cars, clothes, furniture, leisure-activities and habits.



Life-style is an important component of how people spend their time (activities) and what interests and values they have. Life-style is also associated with words like: conservative, liberal, homebody, adventurous and health nut, although no standard technology exists (Evans et al., 1994:210-211).

A popular segmentation system that is used today is VALS, which stands for "Values, Attributes and Lifestyles". Du Plessis (1994:137-138), concludes that VALS is clearly rooted in Maslow's needs hierarchy, although there are important innovations. In this typology it is stated that integrated self-actualisation could be achieved either by means of an outer-directed or inner-directed path, once the individual had achieved satisfaction of his basic needs. Outer-directed consumers are people whose values centre around objectives and activities outside themselves where inner-directed consumers are people who concern themselves with the inner psychological aspects of life (Ritchie & Goeldner, 1994:210-211). Figure 3.10 illustrates the VALS typology.

Figure 3.10. Mitchell's VALS typology



Source : Fridgen, (1991:65)

VALS groups people into four categories based on their self-images, aspirations, values and beliefs, and the products they use. The four categories are the following (McIntosh et al., 1995:448):

- Need-driven groups: Survivor - and sustainer lifestyle.
- Outer-directed groups: Belongers-, emulator- and achiever lifestyles.
- Inner-directed groups: I-am-me-, experiential- and societally conscious lifestyles.
- Combined outer- and inner-directed group: Integrated lifestyle.

These above-mentioned groups are divided further into nine life-style categories listed below (Resnick, 1991:40, Cooper, et al., 1999:43, Du Plessis, 1994:138-139 and McIntosh et al., 1995:450-451):

- **Survivors** - This category is old and very poor people.
- **Sustainers** - These are people on the edge of poverty.
- **Belongers** - This group is aging, conventional and stable.
- **Emulators** - They are youthful, show-offs and are trying to make it big.
- **Achievers** - Middle-aged and prosperous, self assured and materialistic are the descriptive of this group.
- **I-am-me** - This category is young, impulsive, individualistic, single and in a transition state.
- **Experiential** - This is a group of young artistic and inner-directed individuals.
- **Socially conscious** - These people are mature, successful and concerned with the environment.
- **Integrated** - People in this group are psychologically mature, understanding and they possess a world perspective.

The Business Intelligence Centre in America (Arbitron, 2000) refers to VALS as "The Proven Segmentation System", and states that consumer products and service companies in the United States of America have used VALS to improve product development, product advertising effectiveness and corporate image. This company also supports an on-line VALS survey to help businesses identify target markets, uncover what the target group buys and does, locate where concentrations of the target group live, identify how best to communicate with the target group, and most importantly, to gain insight into why the target group acts the way it does (SRI, 2000 and Arbitron, 2000 and Fridgen, 1991:64-66).

Voase (1995:87), states that people segment themselves in terms of their lifestyles. This may be regarded as a personal response to behavioural options, which society and the environment present.

#### 3.5.1.2 Behaviouristic segmentation

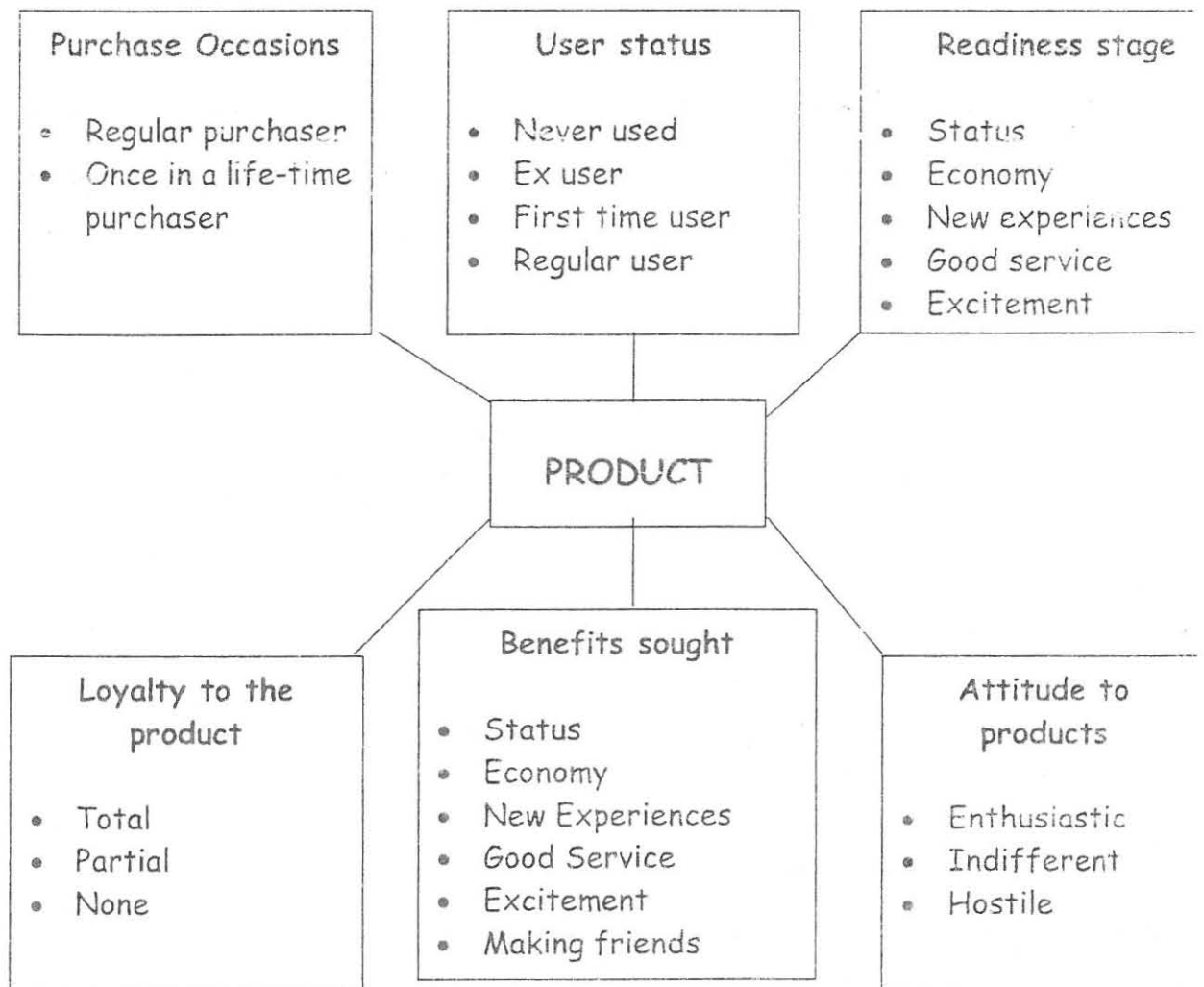
Heath & Wall (1992:100), states that the limitations of psychographic segmentation, such as the high cost of market research, lead to the development of another type of segmentation namely consumers' behaviour towards a specific product. This type of segmenting divides the market into groups who share particular buying interests, preferences or purposes. It is based rather on what people do than on who they are or what their life-style is.

All people have travel habits of which they may or may not be aware. Some families may take a summer holiday at the same place and same resort every year or others go to a different place every year. Habits and preferences may be both friends and foes to the industry. It implies that it is unlikely that a specific consumer will change his/her pattern and go to another destination but it also benefits the current destination in his/her habit. It is also very difficult to change the mind or preference of a consumer (Resnick, 1991:41 and Evan et al., 2003:131).

Swarbrooke and Horner (1999:97), illustrates different forms of behaviouristic segmentation in Figure 3.11.



Figure 3.11. Behaviouristic segmentation



Source: Swarbrooke & Horner (1999:44)

Market segmentation is thus aimed at serving groups with homogeneous needs and desires. To satisfy these needs and desires, the attractiveness of the product should be enhanced by means of positioning.

### 3.5.2. Positioning

Positioning refers to influencing how consumers perceive a brand's characteristics relative to those of competitive offerings (Mowen & Minor, 1998:21, 42 and Reich, 1997:287-288). The goal of the product positioning is to influence demand by creating a product with specific characteristics and a clear image that differentiates it from competitors (Evans et al., 2003:132-135).

The perception of consumers is a critical variable in the marketing process, one that has a great influence on purchasing decisions, especially among similar products. This is the reason why marketers pay special attention to trying to control or influence the way in which their prospective consumers perceive their products. This process of consumer perception is referred to as product positioning, and the main mechanism used to establish a position for the product is by creating an image for it. This issue will be discussed in detail in the next chapter on the product and its image.

### 3.6. Conclusion

Studying consumer behaviour is a very difficult task, but the following general conclusions may be drawn:

- The motivation of any individual tourist is influenced by his/her personality, lifestyle, past experiences and personal circumstances.
- Tourists may well have more than one motivator at one time.

- There are two types of determinants in tourist behaviour - personal (personal circumstances, knowledge, experiences, attitudes and perceptions) and external (views of family and friends, marketing activities, media influence and other external factors).
- There are variants in consumer behaviour within the different sectors of the tourism industry.
- There is a major difference in behaviour between a leisure tourist and a business tourist.
- The concept of quality and the expectations of tourists change over time.
- There are many uncontrollable factors that influence tourist satisfaction such as weather, strikes and difficulties at the destination.
- Tourist dissatisfaction is largely the result of gaps between expectations and perceived outcomes, viewed from the perspective of the tourist.
- Consumer behaviour affects every aspect of marketing.

When studying consumer behaviour, no guaranteed outcome may be predicted (Diamantis, 1998:515-517). Each individual will act differently when motivated by different needs and desires and the decision will be influenced by current external and internal factors existing at that moment. The final decision made by the consumer may be influenced by marketing activities focused at that specific segment of the market, therefore it is important to focus on the

product itself with regards to its image and the perception that the consumer has towards the product.



# THE DESTINATION PRODUCT: - its image and perception

### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

According to Ashworth & Goodall (1993:6-9) and Kim (1998:340), tourism destinations are undoubtedly to be treated as products. The destination is both the product and the container of an assemblage of products (for example, services, accommodation, attractions, and transportation). Lee (2001:230), defines a destination as 'a collection of features appealing to tourists'. Marketing a destination as a product implies that the marketer does not have a definite idea of what the exact nature of the product will be, as the 'producer' (e.g. tour operator) may package a selection of unique products. Marketing a destination implies that places are multi-sold. The same destination may be sold as a historical destination, a shopping destination or, for instance, a sporting destination to the same or different customers.

Image has been proven to be a pivotal factor in tourists' decision process and destination selection behaviour (Baloglu & Mangaloglu, 2001:2). When considering alternative destinations, tourists rely heavily on the image of a particular destination. If the image of a destination coincides with the tourists' preferences and expectations, the destination will be given a favourable rating. An individual's perception of a holiday destination is conditioned by the information available at the time of decision-making. Given a much wider choice and greater variety of destinations, tourists are likely to favour holidays that

offer both the fullest realisation of their personal needs and value for money. Having a good product (in this study the product is the tourist destination) is not enough in a competitive market. Motives and expectations of tourists must be researched. The reasons for travel are closely associated with the motivation, decision and form of travel (Todd, 1999:1022).

From Figure 3.3 in chapter 3, it is evident that image and perception are inter-linked in the decision-making process. The image is based on the individual expectations of the destination as well as the personal preferences of the individual.

The decision to visit a particular destination may be seen as the individual's realisation of his/her particular needs. For the tourist, the decision entails a series of choices like the budget, time available, whom to travel with, and the level of satisfaction likely to be experienced (Laws, 1995:105). As discussed in chapter 3 on consumer behaviour, the tourist's choice of destination reflects the appeal to the individual of its attractions (beaches, buildings, climate, etc.) over those offered by other destinations. One of the main aims of a destination (product) is therefore to create a favourable impression or image of its product, and thereby attracting tourists.

For reasons outlined in chapter 3, paragraphs 3.2.1.2 and 3.2.1.4, the attitudes and perceptions customers have towards products strongly influence their buying decisions. Destination images are not necessarily grounded on experience or facts, but they are powerful motivators in travel and tourism (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999:868-869). All destinations have images often based more on historic, rather than current events, and it is an essential objective of destination marketing to sustain, alter, or develop images, in order to influence

prospective buyers' expectations and to remain competitive in the market (Laws, 1995:106 and Kim, 1998:342).

In order to determine the existing image or perception that exists regarding a specific destination, it is important to establish what a destination (the product) consists of.

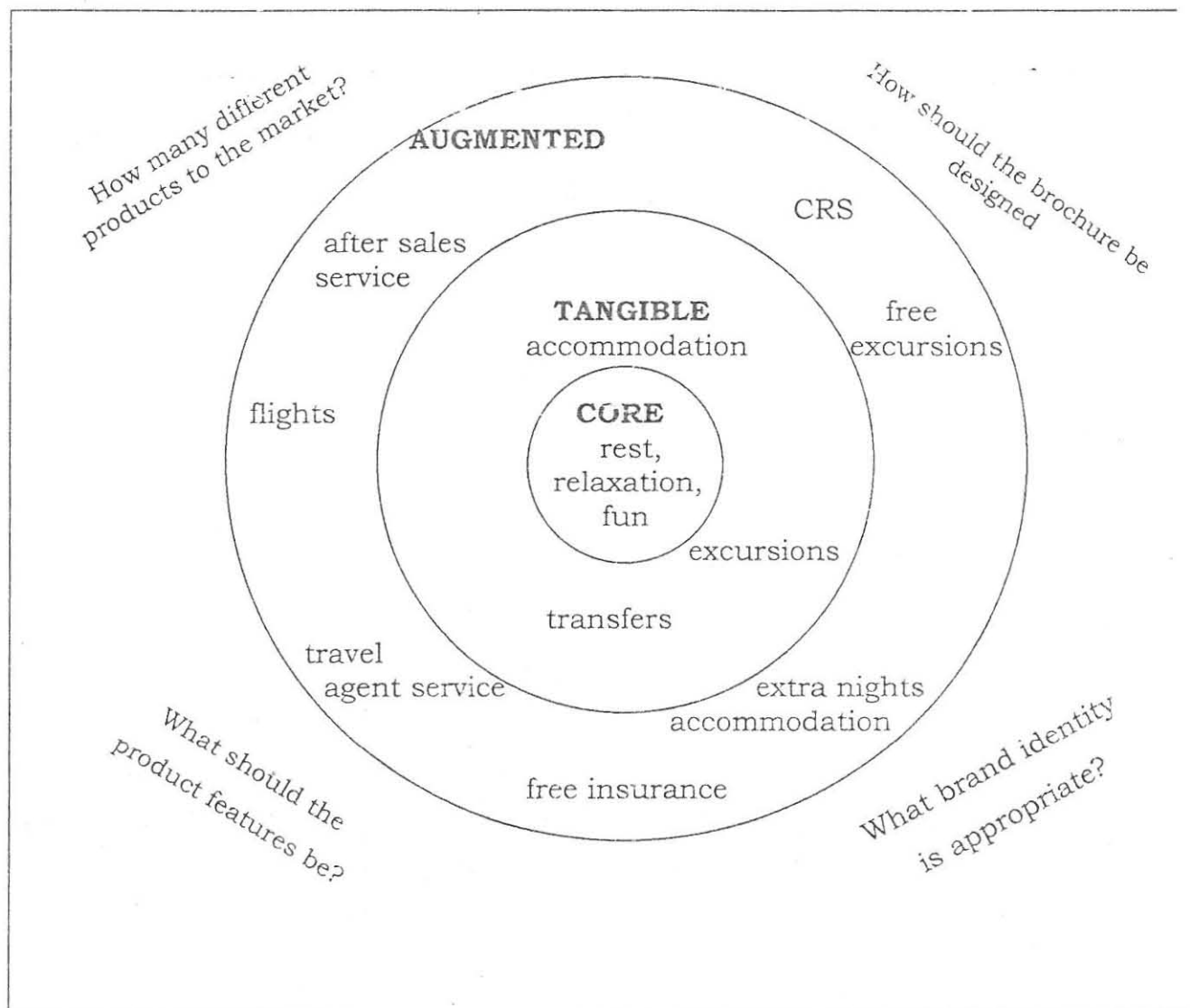
## 4.2. WHAT IS A TRAVEL AND TOURISM PRODUCT?

### 4.2.1. The tourism product in general

The product that the consumer purchases is one of the most important elements of the marketing mix, as it is the product that is bought to satisfy customer needs. If the consumer buys a package from a tour operator and is satisfied with the product, then the consumer may decide to use the same tour operator the next time again. Therefore, the tour operator must pay careful attention to all facets of the product to make sure that they live up to the consumers' expectations and lead to brand and or company loyalty. In the case of tour operators, the product does not just include the holiday purchased, as illustrated in Figure 4.1. This figure indicates all the elements that a travel and tourism product may consist of. As indicated, the product includes all the elements that make up the experience enjoyed by the customer and is made up of three levels. The first level is the core product, which is the main benefit, a need or service. The customer gains this when purchasing the product. The second level is the tangible product, which refers to the formal features of the product purchased. The third level is the augmented product, which refers to all the other aspects or services that 'add value' to the product. These may be tangible or intangible (Callaghan et al., 1994:213).



Figure 4.1. The elements of the travel and tourism product



Source: Callaghan et al. (1994:213)

The tourism product must be designed or amended to reflect consumer needs and wants. If the product is not what the market wants, no amount of price adjustment, dependable delivery or brilliant promotion will encourage consumers to buy it - at least not more than once. If the product, however, satisfies the needs of the consumer then the purchase is likely to be repeated, the purchaser



may buy other products offered by the same producers or organisation or he is likely to recommend the product to other consumers (Bennett, 1998:262).

The travel and tourism product is rather a service than a tangible object, making the marketing more complicated. In this study, the product is a destination (Bloemfontein), which may consist of various elements. A combination of various elements (such as attractions, activities, natural resources, location, etc) contributes to the image or perception that is formed of a destination. It is therefore important to study the various elements of the product.

According to Swarbrooke, (1995:203-204), the product covers the following elements:

- **Designed characteristics and packaging.** Packaging is the combination of related and complementary services into a package deal, which is an example of a partnership that implies efforts from all the different industry groups. A destination package specifically, refers to a package that is characterized by the destination it features (Morrison, 2002:312-314, 588). For instance, one destination may be dominated by shopping packages, whereas another destination is famous for sun-and-sea packages.

Kotler et al., (1996:650-651), suggests that packages of attractions and amenities must be developed in the hope of becoming a chosen destination. By concentrating attractions, services and facilities into a package, excitement, adventure and crowds are attracted.

- **Service component.** Destinations are branded for service excellence and this is dependant on various factors such as, for instance, the staff selling

the product, their appearances, competence and attitude, their friendliness and social interaction with the consumer.

- **Image and reputation.** A good image of a product is one of its most important attributes, as it is specifically the customer's perception of the product that translates directly into choices about whether to use it or not. Many different factors contribute to the image and reputation of a product such as for instance, the exterior view of a hotel, its furnishings, uniforms and dress code standards, and efficiency of staff and reservation procedures (Kaser & Freeman, 2002:214-216).
- **Branding.** Branding is more than giving a product a name or a symbol (Lickorish, 1994:53). It refers to whether or not, the product has a well recognised name and it is also used to differentiate the product from similar products. It therefore becomes possible to associate a particular product with specific benefits, characteristics, etc. A certain loyalty towards a brand is created and may also be used to enhance the image of a specific product (Bennett & Strydom, 2001:110-111 and Faulkner et al., 2000:203). A well-branded destination is known for its dominating characteristics such as for instance sand-and-sea destinations.
- **Positioning.** How is this product rated in terms of market leadership? The product should be positioned in such a way as to serve the target market to its full potential. This concept will be discussed in detail later on in this chapter in paragraph 4.3.1.
- **Benefits derived.** This refers to the value that the product may add to the consumer's life and the value that consumers attach to a product or service.

Enjoyment received from staying at a beachfront hotel and the satisfactions from a pleasant dining experience are examples of benefits derived. These benefits could vary from excitement, educational value or status (Kaser & Freeman, 2002:121).

- **Guarantees and after-sales service.** Morrison, (2002:295-296), suggests that guarantees and after-sales service should benefit both the product owner and the consumer. By putting these commitments into writing, it communicates to consumers what to expect in terms of service delivery, and additionally it gives the product owner's employees a clear idea of what is expected of them in serving consumers. Guarantees and after-sales service should at least involve the handling of complaints, looking after consumers, and interaction after product use or sale thereof.
- **Quality.** Bennett & Strydom (2001:20-21), define quality as whatever the consumers say it is, and the quality of a particular product or service is whatever the consumer perceives it to be. Also compare Barrett (1995:8-10) and Irons (1997:141). Quality should not be defined in terms of a product, but rather in terms of a total way of doing business and a total commitment to the customer and may be measured by the number of complaints.

The tourism industry comprises a wide variety of different product suppliers. Whether the product supplier in question is in transportation or accommodation, all will be providing a product or service to the consumer. In the majority of the cases, this product will be intangible, which implies that it is impossible to rework a faulty product, and producers are not given a second chance. Therefore it is imperative that the product is made right the first time. Total Quality Management (TQM) is an approach to improving effectiveness and



quality as a whole (Witt & Molinero, 1993:259). A compromise has to be reached between the customer's demand for higher quality at lower cost and time and the company's addendum: at a reasonable profit (George & Weimerskirch, 1994: v).

Morrison (2002:298-291), lists the five key principles of TQM as the following:

- **Commitment to quality:** Quality may be defined as a degree of excellence. Any product owner that institutes TQM must make a commitment to have quality as a top priority. George & Weimerskirch (1994:18-20), suggest that the manager and the company must be committed to the TQM process in order for it to be successful, and must therefore participate in quality training and focus on all other managerial aspects of TQM to ensure total commitment to quality.
- **Focus on customer satisfaction:** Organisations must recognise that consumers care about quality, and the product owner has to make specific efforts to establish what levels of service quality the consumers want. Once established, every effort must be made to meet or exceed those standards (Weiermair & Fuchs, 1999:1004-1005).

The purpose of a TQM company is to satisfy customer wants and needs. Consequently, these companies get close to their customers and deliver products and services that are aimed at satisfaction. They improve quality and value of the products and invent better, new and different ones in an attempt to attract new ones (Barrett, 1995:14).



- **Assessment of organisational culture:** An organisation must examine how consistent its existing culture is with the principles of TQM. This assessment will usually involve top executives and employees who will conduct an assessment over a period of months.

According to Barrett (1995:46-49), the following features should be present in the new TQM organisation:

- An outward looking company that views itself as part of the larger planetary whole;
  - An organisation that survives and thrives by adapting to change and takes advantage of new opportunities that change provides;
  - A company that focuses on the future and what it holds, and is driven by creativity and new innovative ideas.
- **Empowerment of employees and teams:** Empowering employees enables them to satisfy each individual consumer's needs.

In the TQM enterprise, employees receive substantial amounts of training and education, in order to function confidently at higher levels of authority and responsibility. Learning and empowerment go hand in hand, as knowledge is power. When the abilities, skills and knowledge of an entire company rise to a new position, that organisation itself gains enormously in strength (Barrett, 1995:47).

Mohrman, et al. (1998:186-187, 202), states that empowerment studies have shown positive effects in outcomes: it gives employees more autonomy, more self-control, more skills, higher self-esteem, and, in general, it creates a

more satisfying work environment for them. Empowerment of employees also leads to employees taking responsibility for quality as they are expected to call attention to quality-related problems as they go about their normal tasks. It is also expected of them to accept the culture of continuous improvement and to look for ways in which the work may be done better. Furthermore, empowerment speeds up the decision making process where disputes may be settled immediately, especially in the area of customer service.

- **Measurement of quality efforts:** The results of quality improvement efforts must be measured to be evaluated. This means measuring consumer satisfaction levels, employee performance and other indicators of service quality (Shriver, 1988:30 and Weiermair & Fuchs, 1999:1005).

The question arises: How is quality measured? Quality is subjective and lends itself to grading, scaling and ranking. The TQM approach, in partnership and respect with the consumer, concentrates on finding out what the customer judges quality to be, and then the company proceeds to meet, and exceed that particular expectation. Thus, the company tries to provide the kind of qualities and level of excellence that each type of consumer wants.

Through interviews, researchers have developed specific consumer-centered criteria for evaluating the quality of service (Barrett, 1995:10). Witt & Moutinho (1994:261), identified the same criteria and states that these dimensions are found in any service that a consumer will assess when using a service:

- **Tangibles:** The appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication materials.
- **Reliability:** The ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
- **Responsiveness:** The willingness to help consumers and provide prompt service.
- **Assurance:** The knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence (Shriver, 1988:32).
- **Empathy:** The caring, individualized attention the firm provides its consumers.

It is clear that a tourism product has a complex and diverse variety of features and characteristics, which involves more than a mere combination of various elements. The product also has to satisfy the psychological needs of the consumer. Furthermore, the tourism product has its own uniqueness when compared to other products. The tourism destination as a product also varies from other tourism products. Further study in this regard is thus necessary.

#### 4.2.2. The tourism destination

A tourism destination (the product in this study) comprises a mix of several different components like travel, accommodation, attractions and other supporting facilities. These components may be bought as a package from a tour operator, individually from travel agents, or the consumer may visit the

destination independently. From the standpoint of a customer considering any form of tourist visit, the product may be defined as a bundle or package of tangible or intangible components, based on activities at a destination (Middleton, 1994:86-87).

Middleton (1994:86), lists the main components of the overall destination product as the following:

- Destination attractions and environment, for example natural, manmade, cultural and historical attractions.
- Destination facilities and services refer to infrastructure and support services offered by the destination.
- Accessibility of the destination by means of all the different forms of transportation.
- Price to the consumer. This depends on the affordability of the destination in general to the consumers in the identified target markets.
- Images of the destination. This is a representation of what the tourist expects the destination to be, based on various stimuli (Kim, 1998:340-342).

Laws (1995:14-15), on the other hand, elaborates even further on the elements of tourist destinations, which contribute to the attractiveness of a tourism region. According to Laws, the primary features of the destination include its climate, ecology, cultural traditions, traditional architecture and its landforms. The secondary destination features are the developments introduced

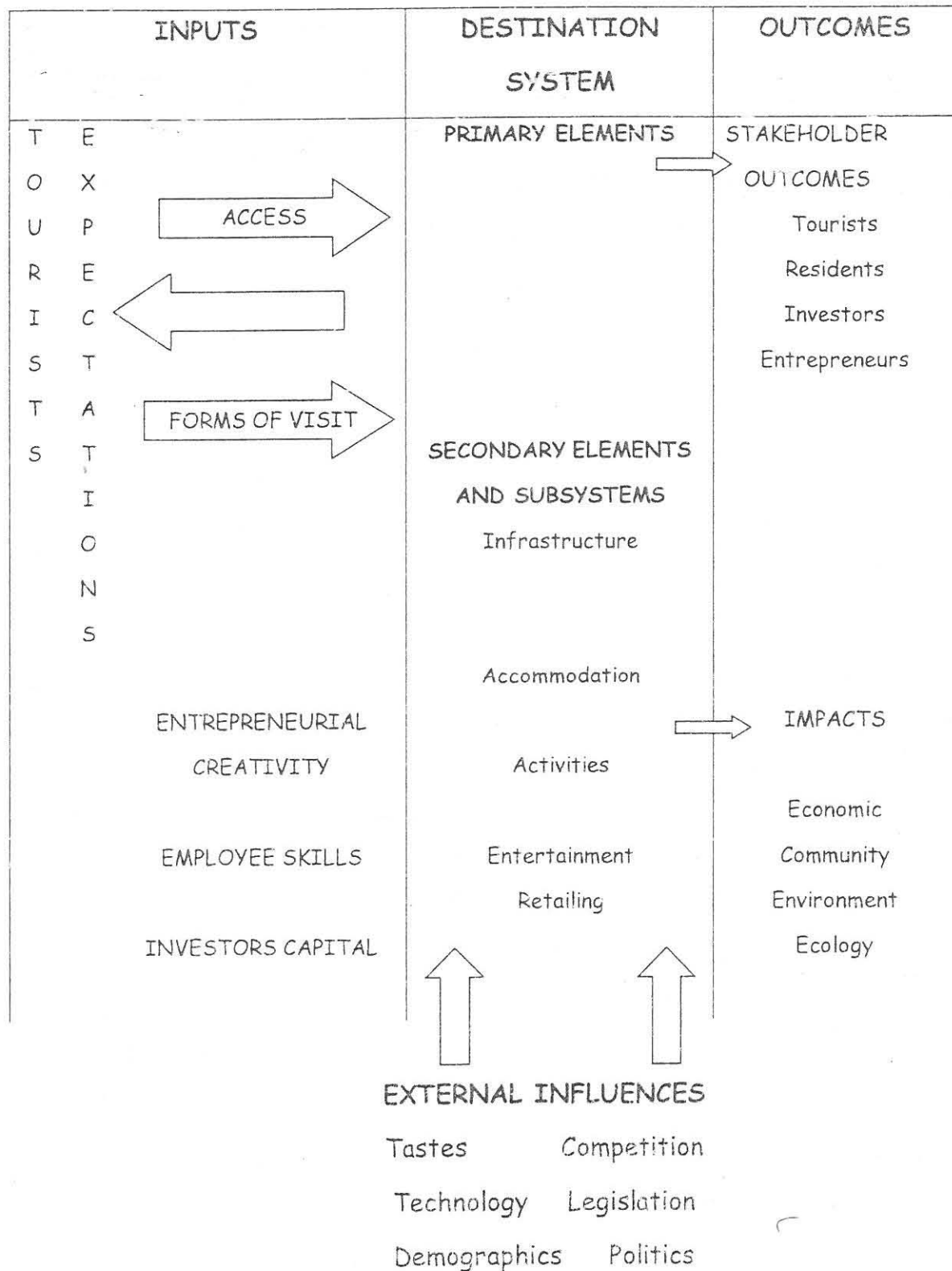


specifically for tourists, such as hotels, catering, transport, activities and amusement.

Each tourist destination has a unique range of features to attract visitors, but the challenge it faces is that each potential visitor has a very wide choice amongst destinations. A number of factors contribute to the attractiveness of a tourism region; some are natural features such as landscape and climate; others are cultural or developed specifically for tourism like theme parks. An area's success as a destination reflects other factors such as its stage of development, its accessibility and the awareness of it amongst its potential visitors.

Figure 4.2 illustrates the different components of the general tourist destination model. All tourist destination systems consist of primary and secondary features. Every destination has a unique mix of characteristics, which are determined by its geographical location, culture and history. The development of a specific systems model for each destination may clarify the relative importance of each element (Laws, 1995: 35-37; Swarbrooke, 1995:39-41).

Figure 4.2. The general tourist destination systems model



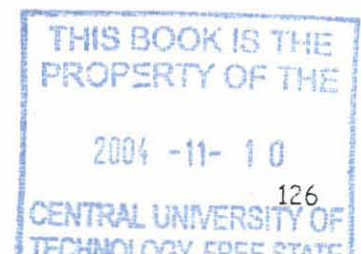
Source: Laws (1995:36)

The destination's inputs include:

- **Access:** Accessibility refers to all the elements that affect the cost, speed and convenience with which a particular tourist destination may be reached. These include elements such as infrastructure (roads, airports, seaports, railways), transportation equipment (size, speed and range of options), operational factors (routes, frequency of services and prices charged) and government regulations that relate to transport options (Bennett & Strydom, 2001:107).
- **Promotion:** This refers to a variety of methods used to communicate with the target market of the destination. The marketers of the destination use the promotional methods best suited to both the product and their promotional objectives. Without successful promotion, a well-designed and produced product or service may go unnoticed, however well distributed and priced it may be. The result of these marketing activities has a direct influence on the image of the destination (Pender, 1999:241 - 242 and Myers, 1986:363).

The destination's system refers to its primary and secondary elements:

- **Primary elements:** Examples of primary elements of a destination are its natural resources, natural and man-made attractions, the environment, the image of the destination and the history and culture of the destination.
- **Secondary elements:** Examples of secondary elements of a destination may include infrastructure, accommodation, activities, entertainment and retailing.



The outcomes and impacts of the destination include tourists that visit, as well as investors and entrepreneurs that uplift the destination. This has an economic impact on the community and environment (pollution, over use of an area) as well as the ecology of the destination.

The external influences consist of elements such as tastes, technology, competition, politics and others, which are typically beyond the control of the destination. Interestingly, other external considerations that have an influence on the destination, include considerations such as when is the best time to visit and what the weather conditions are like (Pearce, et al., 1998:83).

#### 4.2.3. Choosing a destination

The choice of a holiday destination is an important decision not just to tourists, but also to marketers and service providers alike. Choosing a destination is only one of the few decisions that the tourist has to make (Papatheodorou, 2001:164-165). Listed below are various considerations taken into account by a tourist (Pearce, et al., 1998: 81-83):

**Awareness:** An individual who contemplates a holiday, already has numerous travel destinations in his/her awareness set. These destinations reflect ideal holidays and are to a certain extent fantasies or daydreams. External stimuli influence the decision-making and could be one of the following:

- **Significance stimuli** which refer to an individual's previous experience with the destination;



- Symbolic stimuli which are influenced by text and images from promotional and media sources;
- Social stimuli which take place from other people's travel information and accounts.

**Internal input:** The individual's own motives, values and attitudes act as a filter or preference-sorting mechanism among the destinations in the awareness set (Gomez-Jacinto et al., 1999:1025-1026). Personal characteristics such as employment obligations, level of income and needs and values of family members also play a role.

**External input:** The tourist gathers external information regarding the considered destination. This includes information such as when is the best time to visit, are there currently any problems in that area and articles in the media.

When consumers choose a destination, the following aspects must be taken into consideration (Holloway, 1993:46-48):

- When tourists travel to relatives for a visit or for business purposes, consumers may have no choice determining their destination. Low-income groups may also have relatively little choice of destination as time and/or money limit the range of alternatives.
- The main reason for choosing a destination is its attractions. The tourists should be aware of all the attractions at the destination. This will ensure that they may satisfy their needs and thus it emphasises the motivation to visit a specific destination. The tourists have to know and recognise their

needs very well. If they do not know them, they may not correctly diagnose the benefits, which could satisfy their needs.

- Distractions like bad sewage facilities, transport links, car parking, shopping, bad weather and the relationship with the host population may motivate tourists negatively.
- Major destination constraints are money and time (Sinclair & Stabler, 1991:21-23). A long exotic holiday may satisfy the needs of the tourist, but it is not possible due to money and/or time constraints. Both these constraints may exist simultaneously (no money or no school holiday) or individually (pensioner, no time constraint but low funds) (Holloway, 1993:46-48).

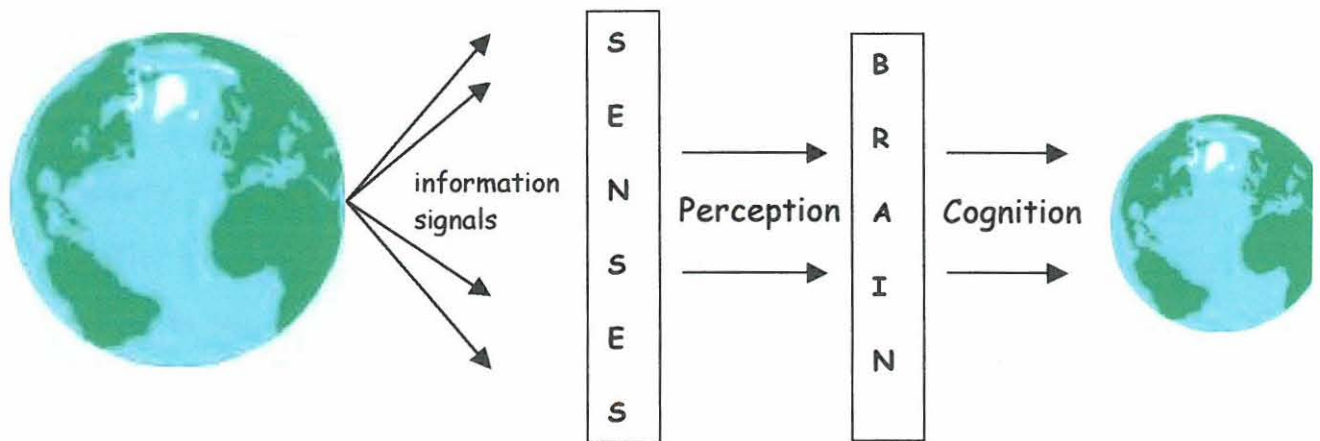
#### 4.2.4. The image of the destination

Images of tourist destinations are based on motivation and perceived ideas about a destination (Bennett, 1998:24 and Manuel et al., 1996:32-33). Such an image may be defined as the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a specific destination. An image is a personal composite view of a destination's tourism potential, and is not necessarily the same for each visitor. An image is formed on the basis of past holiday experiences, hearsay, information from other people, the media or travel agents. The dominant attributes people use to sort these mental images are often related to cost, climate, scenery, personal safety and sanitation. These factors may have an important bearing on their choice of destination (Bennett, 1998:92-94 and Kim, 1998:340-341). In Figure 4.3 the process through which individuals perceive the urban environment is illustrated.

Figure 4.3. The real world versus the mental image of the world

The real world

Mental image  
of a destination



Source: Ryan (1997:124)

Whilst Figure 4.3 represents a simplification of an individual's perception of an image, no two individuals will have an identical image of a destination because the information they receive is subject to mental processing. This is conditioned by the information signals received through one's senses (for example, sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch) and this is part of the process known as perception. As our senses may only comprehend a small portion of the total information received, the human brain sorts the information and relates it to knowledge, values and attitudes of the individual through the process of cognition. The final outcome of the perception and cognition process is the formation of a mental image of a destination. These images are an individual's own view of reality, but they are important to the individual when making decisions about his/her experience of a destination, whether to visit again, and his/her feelings in relation to the tourist experience of the place (Ryan, 1997:123-125). In marketing, image is everything (Davidoff & Davidoff,



1998:100). The perception that the customers have of a product, whether it is true or not, will determine the success of the product. It is critical that a positive image of the product is maintained, as it is very difficult to change or overcome a negative image (Gomez-Jacinto, 1999:1024-1025). Davidoff & Davidoff (1998:100-102) covers certain aspects that may create image problems:

- **Safety.** Safety is one of Maslow's most basic human physiological needs (Kotler et al, 1996:77). According to Keyser (2002:232), the perception that exists in the marketplace that many countries of the developing world are unsafe tourism destinations is the most important threat facing the tourism industry. These perceptions are usually related to high incidences of crime in the society generally, and against tourists specifically.

Crime against tourists is the most prominent aspect related to tourist safety, and an issue of considerable concern to various destinations. Crime creates negative perceptions of the destination, and may result in inhibited demand, or even a reduction in demand, if only for the short term. The White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT, 1996) identifies safety and security as one of the primary issues of importance (Keyser, 2001:381-382).

- **Cost.** An incorrect perception of costs may also create an image problem for a specific destination. Some destinations have an image as being expensive. This image may be created for instance through expensive airfares, but expensive airfares do not necessarily imply that other products at the destination are expensive (Davidoff & Davidoff, 1998:101).



Pearce et al. (1998:79-80), considers that the airfare is the most important of the price factors in the international consumer's choice of destination, and that exchange rates that fluctuate are seen to have more impact on hotel tariffs, although the effect is small and not significant. The challenge for the tourist destinations is to isolate themselves from factors such as price increases related to exchange rates.

The price of the product is a critical element of the marketing mix, because it has different meanings to the consumers and organisations. To the consumer, price represents the amount of money he/she has to pay for the product and thus for the need to be satisfied. The consumer will view the price as acceptable if he/she perceives the value that he/she receives equal to or more than the value that he/she has paid for the product. To the organisation, price is important because it relates directly to the income and profitability of the organisation (Bennett, 1998:213).

- **Product differentiation.** There are not always major differences between products, and selling merely takes place on image. For instance, airlines basically sell identical products, but the airline will create a certain image of being safer or on time, to gain the competitive edge. When creating an image, the names used may be associated with a specific image, and logos and signs, also play a significant role (Manuel, et al., 1996:40-41). George (2001:174), states that names, logos and slogans are a significant aspect of branding, and that research has shown that the style and design of logos and the strength of a name may greatly affect a consumer's perception of an offering or product.

A destination may differentiate its products or offer products similar to competitors. However, nowadays, most producers try to differentiate their products from others. This may be achieved through various methods (Kotler et al., 1996:262-263):

- Physical attribute differentiation takes place where the destination offers something different that competitors cannot match, such as a newly renovated hotel situated in the perfect location, compared to a newly built hotel at a not-so-nice location.
- Service differentiation by providing extra services that will benefit its target market, such as for instance an in-room check-in service at a hotel.
- Personnel differentiation through hiring and training better people than their competitors do.
- Location differentiation through the provision of strong competition in the tourism industry such as a restaurant on top of a mountain or a room with a sea view.
- Image differentiation based on the product or brand images. Even though products look the same, buyers may perceive them differently because of their image. A company brand or image should convey a singular or distinctive message that communicates the product's major benefits and positioning.

The image of a destination is concerned with transferring meaning onto a product from the outside through repeated imagistic association (Morgan &

Pritchard, 1999:27). The consumer will make certain assumptions based on the advertisement – for instance, a brochure or advertisement depicting a young couple under an umbrella gazing over an empty beach and blue sea, will with the correct wording, unmistakable lead to an assumption of blue seas, romance, relaxation and golden beaches. This illustrates the way in which brand imaging of destinations links them symbolically to a wider world of social values. Like all advertisements, this is a two-way communication process – to accept the setting message is to accept the values it presupposes (Morgan & Pritchard, 1999:27).

Beach (1990:16-17), identifies three kinds of images:

- **Visual image:** These are experimental concomitants of physical stimulation of the receptors of the eye. Vision is the ability to see the features of objects we look at, such as colour, shape, size, details, depth, and contrast. Vision is achieved when the eyes and brain work together to form pictures of the world around us. Vision begins with light rays bouncing off the surface of objects. These reflected light rays enter the eye and are transformed into electrical signals. Millions of signals per second leave the eye via the optic nerve and travel to the visual area of the brain. Brain cells then decode the signals into images, providing us with sight (MSN Encarta, 2002). An individual's *sensory memory* refers to the initial, momentary recording of information in his/her sensory systems. When sensations strike our eyes, they linger briefly in the visual system. This kind of sensory memory is called *iconic memory* and refers to the usually brief visual persistence of information as it is being interpreted by the visual system. Similar systems are assumed to exist for other sensory systems (touch, taste, and smell), although researchers have studied these senses less thoroughly.



- **Mental images** are psychologically gated events, recalling or imagining an image to mind. But what is a mental image? It is generally agreed that having a mental image is seeing something in the mind's eye. This is distinct from actually seeing something "out there" in physical reality. When we have a mental image of something, we picture it inwardly. This may include having a dream, hallucination, creating an active fantasy or daydreaming. It is crucial to note, however, that no matter how "similar" such an experience may be to seeing, the phrase "having a *mental* image" means the experience does *not* involve actual vision, individuals are not actually seeing any physical object when they have a mental image of the object (GIS, 2002).
- **Cognitive images** are more remote from visual images, although they may retain some of the visual image's pictorial quality. These images are a combination of mental and non-image knowledge. Cognitive images have some features that are pictorial, others are semantic, and some are emotional. Baloglu & McCleary, 1999:872 refer to it as 'beliefs and knowledge about an object'.

In general, an image of the environment or destination comprises ten key features (Ryan, 1997:123-125):

- A spatial component accounting for an individual's location in the world. Even though a destination's image may be appealing to an individual, it may just not be possible to visit that specific destination due to the distance needed to travel;
- A personal component relating the individual to other people and organisations. This refers to personal issues such as leave due, company



policies, relief staff and other personal issues playing a direct role on the possibility of the vacation;

- A temporal component concerned with the flow of time. At a specific moment in time a destination may become suited or unsuited for a specific individual;
- A relational component concerned with the individual's picture of the universe as a system of regularities;
- Conscious, subconscious and unconscious elements that influence the image of the destination. All internal and external factors may influence this image;
- A blend of certainty and uncertainty. These may be, for example, factors that may possibly influence the destination now or in the future;
- A mixture of reality and unreality. As noted previously, images and perceptions are not always based on true facts;
- A public and private component expressing the degree to which an image is shared amongst friends or the society as such;
- A value component that orders part of the image according to the individual's own set of values of what is good and what is bad;
- An affectional component whereby the image is imbued with feeling due to past experiences and memories (Ryan, 1997:123-125).

#### 4.2.5. The importance of image

Having studied image and the elements thereof, the question is raised, why is image important to a destination? The image of a destination area is a critical factor when choosing a destination (Anderton, 1995:7-8). Whether or not an image is in fact a true representation of what the destination has to offer the tourist or not, is of secondary importance. What is important is the image that exists in the mind of the tourist.

The tourist may possess a variety of images in connection with travel. These include the image he/she has formed, of the destination, the term 'holiday' itself, the tour operator, and his/her self-image. An individual's awareness of the world is made up of experiences, learning, emotions and perceptions, or more accurately, the cognitive evaluation of such experiences, learning, emotions and perceptions. Such awareness may be described as knowledge producing a specific image of the world. This image is critically important to an individual's preference, motivation and behaviour towards tourist products and destinations, as it will provide a "pull" effect resulting in different demand schedules (Todd, 1999:1022).

There are different ways to describe the word 'image'. The World Tourism Organisation (WTO, 2001) defines it as follows:

- The artificial imitation of the apparent form of an object;
- Form resemblance identity (e.g. art and design);
- Ideas, conceptions held individually or collectively of the destination.

Nobody is likely to visit a destination for tourism if he/she dislikes it. A tourist discovery may lead to knowledge of other aspects of an economic, political or cultural nature of that destination. Tourist behaviour depends upon their image of immediate situations and the world. The notion of image is closely related to behaviour and attitudes. Attitudes and behaviour become established on the basis of a person's derived image, and are not easily changed unless new information or experience is gained.

#### 4.2.5.1. What is the function of image?

Images serve many functions at many different levels. In tourism, images are used in a number of ways to convey ideas and messages (Morgan & Pritchard, 1999:3 and Lubbe, 2000:318-319):

- It may be used to communicate messages about particular places and products.
- It may be used to redefine and reposition places and products, especially after a change has been made to the product.
- Images may be used to counter negative and enhance positive perceptions of products, places and people.
- Images may be used to target key market areas.
- An image may also be used as a positioning tool. An accurate assessment of image is the key to designing an effective marketing and positioning strategy (Baloglu & Mangalolu, 2001:3).

It is important at this stage to differentiate between image and perception. An image of a destination is formed after the individual receives information through his/her senses of the destination and through mental processing. A perception on the other hand is a personal feeling which may either be subjective or not, based on an impression or belief.

#### 4.2.6. Perceptions of a destination

A perception is a personal feeling, impression belief or comprehension of an object, event or quality that may or may not be factual. According to Swanson & Holton, (1999:134-137) and Lewis et al., (1995:204), perceptions may either be:

- Participant perceptions: perceptions of people having first-hand experience of systems, processes, people, goods or services.
- Stakeholder perceptions: perceptions of leaders of systems and people having a vested interest in the desired results and the means of achieving them.

Perceptions are in the minds of the beholders. The limited and tricky side of a perception is that the individual may strongly believe in it, yet it may be wrong. Sometimes one needs to carefully consider the facts outside the person and the perceptions within the person in order to form the total picture.

Perceptions have important value but they have limitations as well. The core limitation is that what people feel or believe (their perceptions) and what they do (their individual performance) may be totally disconnected. Because



perceptions are powerful and easily distorted or misinterpreted, it is important to pursue them with clarity (Swanson & Holton, 1999:134-137 and Manuel et al., 1996:32-36).

Sources of travel information used by tourists create a perception of a destination. Before people make a decision about where to go for a holiday, they spend a considerable amount of time researching the destination options available (as discussed in chapter 3). This information influences the perception of the destination, environment and people. Information is obtained, according to Manuel, et al. (1996:40-41) from:

- Talking to other people such as friends, relatives, colleagues who have had experiences in travelling to different places. These people are of the most influential sources of impressions.
- Newspapers featuring special tourist sections, news pages or special supplements on popular tourist destinations.
- Books with travel stories and coffee-table books, novels and picture books.
- Regular weekly and monthly journals, like National Geographic, and Time.
- Specialist journals, highlighting special activities and information for specific interest groups such as divers, 4 x 4 enthusiasts, and historical groups. This includes information about tours, accommodation, packages, deals and prices.
- Posters, promoting special events and places.

- Television programmes, with travel documentaries and soap operas that provide a view of people and their environments.
- Television and radio commercials selling a product for travel and tourism, associated with sport in an advertisement.
- Sponsorship prizes, offered as a prize in competitions.
- Special group tours like religious, sport and cultural tours.

Kim Hyounggon and Sarah Richardson (TTRA, 2002) conducted research on the impacts of a popular motion picture on destination perceptions, and found that motion pictures serve as conveyors of place images. Movie viewing presents a different kind of experience with a destination. Cinematic literature suggests that people may experience a destination vicariously by identifying with the characters in a film and thus experiencing a place through the experiences of those characters. The level of empathetic involvement with the film characters could affect the perceptions viewers have of the place depicted in the film. To better the relationship of empathetic involvement to destination perceptions within the larger tourism decision-making context, cognitive and affective images, and interest in visiting the place depicted in the film must be included.

The results revealed that the movie significantly affected some of the destination image components and interest in visiting the destination. The findings of the study have several theoretical and marketing implications, and it suggests that a movie could be an effective tool to change a destination image and affect an audience's perception of the destination to interest them in visiting the place.

### 4.3. MARKETING THE DESTINATION

The traditional starting point for a marketing plan of a destination is making a diagnosis where the current market performance lies. This provides a detailed platform for the prognosis which forecasts future trends for each of the market sectors, as well as specified action to be taken. The last aspect of the planning process is a control system through which the implementation of the plan is monitored and results evaluated (Faulkner et al., 2000:200-206).

Positioning a product has a direct correlation with the product's image and the perception that consumers have of the product. Further, it is a marketing tool used to differentiate one product from another as well as enhancing the benefits of the product to the target market. Due to the emphasis of image and perception in this study, positioning of the product will be discussed in detail.

#### 4.3.1.Positioning the tourism destination

One of the most effective tools in tourism marketing is positioning. Positioning is more than just image creation. It is a form of market communication that plays a vital role in enhancing the attractiveness of a product (tourism destination). The objective of positioning is to create a distinctive place in the minds of potential customers. Positioning is a communication strategy that is the natural follow-through of market segmentation and target marketing. An effective positioning strategy may provide the competitive edge to a destination (Hotel-online, 2000 and Reich, 1997:287-288). Thus, to be effective, positioning must promise the benefit the consumer will receive, create the expectation, and offer a solution to the consumer's problem (i.e., to satisfy needs and wants). There are two requirements/ tests of effective positioning.



Firstly, the position must be ~~beneficial~~ <sup>memorable</sup> in the tourist's mind. Secondly, the destination must deliver that promise on a consistent basis (Hotel-online, 2000).

Morrison (2002:222-223), states that there are three elements in true positioning:

- Creating an image;
- Communicating customer benefits to the target market;
- Differentiating the brand from other competitors.

He elaborates further by listing the following steps for effective positioning, and calls it the five D's of positioning:

- **Documenting:** Identifying the benefits that are most important to the customers who buy your type of service.
- **Deciding** on the image you want customers to have within your chosen markets.
- **Differentiating:** Pinpointing the competitors you want to appear different from, and the things that make you different.
- **Designing:** Providing product or service differences, and communicating these in positioning statements and other aspects of the marketing mix.
- **Delivering:** Ensuring that you deliver the service / product promised to the consumer.



George (2001:124-125), suggests a different approach to positioning according to the following three steps:

**Step one: Identify a set of competitive advantages** upon which to gain a position in the marketplace. These advantages may be anything that makes the product stand out in the market.

**Step two: Select the right competitive advantages** that will give the product a distinctive position in the marketplace. A marketer may either choose one major advantage and focus on that or combine more than one benefit.

**Step three: Communicating and delivering the chosen position** to the target market by devising a marketing mix to achieve a strategic position.

Heath (1989:145 - 147), in his research on strategic marketing planning, argues that a good positioning strategy is achieved by a combination of management judgement and experience, trial and error and even field research. He suggests the following steps to be followed:

**Step 1: Assess current position** with respect to its major competitors by doing a survey on relevant tourism groups, to enable the product owner to make a comparison. In this regard, it is important to remember that together with knowing what the comparative positions are, it is equally important to find out what the key attributes are that tourists use when comparing destinations.

**Step 2: Select a desired position.** Having stressed the product's current position in the market, it may decide that the current position is strong and desirable, or develop a new or clarified position and communicate it, or position

the product on a new dimension. This is a dimension that tourists may value, but do not routinely use in evaluating the product's offering.

**Step 3 and 4: Planning and implementing** is a difficult and challenging task as old perceptions are hard to change. All the different types of marketing efforts must be used to achieve this.

It is also suggested that the first step in the process, according to Heath, is to determine the criteria for competitive success. This must be based on a thorough knowledge of needs, wants, and perceptions of the target market. To obtain this knowledge, a few crucial questions must be answered (Hotel-online, 2000):

- What is important to the target market?
- How does the target market perceive the destination?
- How does the target market perceive the competition?
- What attributes should a destination use to differentiate it to make the best use of its limited resources?

Market positioning also requires an evaluation of the image that customers have of a tourism destination. This may be used to identify the vital elements, which comprise the benefits. The beauty of architecture or historic artifacts is examples of attributes that may produce a benefit, but are not themselves the benefit. The benefit itself is what the attributes do for the visitor, for instance, a sensation of grandeur, an aura of prestige, or the gaining of knowledge. The credibility of these benefits may diminish rapidly if expectations are not fulfilled. Benefits exist in the mind of the consumer and are determined only by asking the consumer. After this information is obtained,

by the tourist. This may not necessarily reflect the true state of the destination's physical characteristics, but forms part of the tourists' mental perception. Bennett (1998:206), describes it as an attempt to form, reinforce, or change, the potential visitor's image without really altering the physical characteristics of the services or products. This is usually achieved by an intensive advertising campaign.

When positioning the tourism product, common mistakes made by destination marketers (GWU, 2000), are the following:

- Offering outdated products to a changing marketplace.
- Underestimating the competition.
- Ignoring changes taking place in the customer base.
- Letting particular industry segments dominant the market instead of a balanced mix of products.
- Not using an integrated strategy and consistent message.
- Getting caught in the price-based downward spiral instead of being price effective.
- Not working the politics used in the tourist industry.
- Using only advertising and promotion to attract visitors.

Positioning the product itself is not a widely researched field, and once a positioning strategy is decided upon, the implementation and communication thereof is also a difficult and challenging task. The next step is then undoubtedly, how to change the product.



#### 4.3.2 Promotional strategy

Many changes in destinations are not planned and they occur because travel and tourism, especially at international level, is a free market. It is in the promotional field of images and perceptions that some of the most interesting changes occur, and these are marketing decisions (Faulkner et al., 2000:200-201).

When considering a destination as a product, it is clear that there is no natural or automatic harmony between the components of the product. There are many different organisations with conflicting interests, and it is indeed the diversity of fragmentation of overall control, and the freedom of the product owner to act according to their own perceived self-interests, which makes it very difficult to exert co-ordinate marketing and planning (Middleton, 1994:88-89).

The promotional strategy means implementing promotional programmes to project destination images and key messages to targeted segments of potential visitors. To be effective, such campaigns must be of sufficient weight and impact to create the necessary numbers of potential customers who are aware of and predisposed to the destination. If the budget is not adequate for the task, expenditure on an image-creating strategy may in practice be a waste of money on desirable objectives that cannot be achieved (Middleton, 1994:232-233).

The vital function is choosing the single-minded communication propositions (messages and symbols), that serve to identify and position a country in the mind of prospective visitors and differentiate the destination from the others.



Developing successful images and implementing them effectively require detailed consumer research and creative flair.

#### 4.4. CONCLUSION

Despite the availability of a wide variety of attractions at a destination, some destinations fail to fulfill their tourism potential mainly because their promotion is not themed or targeted effectively. Thus, the primary goal in promoting a destination is to project its image to potential tourists so that the product may become desirable to them. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the destination's image in terms of its psychological or perceptual value, as well as its various potential tourism-orientated activities and attractions (Kim, 1998:340-341).

# EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

### 5.1. INTRODUCTION

A destination may be viewed as a uniquely complex product of the tourism industry comprising of various attributes. Despite its complexity, it is nevertheless a product, which possesses an image, as all places have images that may be good, bad or indifferent. A tourist's decision is determined not only by the destination's potential for performance, but also by the perception of its personality or image. Thus it is possible to say that (potential) tourists hold images of destinations, and that destination choice is influenced by the individual's perception of alternative possibilities (Kim, 1998:340-341).

A destination's image may be referred to as the visual or mental impression of a place or a product experienced by the general public. When initial credibility differs from the public's perception of a product, the perception of the image will determine that product's success or failure. Therefore, it is critical for any product to sustain a positive image. Tourists have become increasingly discriminating and have high expectations. Thus, the primary goal in promoting a destination is to project an image to potential tourists so that the product may become desirable to them (Kim, 1998:341).

Tour operators put together tours or packages to different destinations that include one or more of the following components: transportation, accommodation, transfers, meals, attractions and sightseeing (Todd & Rice, 1996:151). The tour operator selects the destinations and different elements of the tour or

package. The tour operator researches the need of the market or tourist, takes familiarisation trips, and prepares the tour programme (Bennett, 1998:65). In order for the tour operator to be successful, their tours or packages should be firmly rooted in the needs of consumers. There are however external factors which cannot be controlled by the tour operator, one being for instance the image of the destination (Yale, 1995:251).

Tour operators stimulate the tourism products of destinations and thus play a very important role in the success of a destination or not, and therefore the perceptions that they have about Bloemfontein as a destination is very important.

As stated in chapter 1, the objectives of the empirical study was to:

- Determine the current tourism image of Bloemfontein as a tourist destination as perceived by tour operators in the major metropolitan areas of South Africa<sup>5</sup>.

## 5.2. RESULTS

The results of this study are organised in the following fashion:

- The profile of the tour operator.
- The market of the tour operator.
- Perception of Bloemfontein.
- General knowledge of Bloemfontein.
- Marketing of Bloemfontein.

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<sup>5</sup> See Annexure B for full details on places of interest in Bloemfontein.

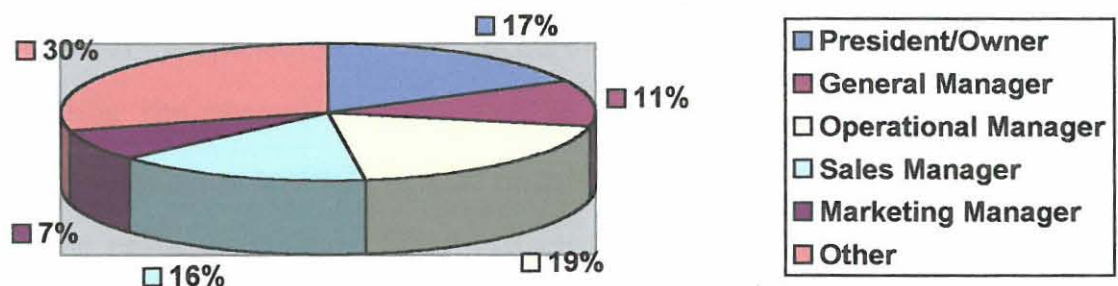
### 5.2.1. The profile of the tour operator

The questionnaire sourced information on the job description of the respondents, their age and their experience in the selling of packages. Furthermore, the age of respondents was tested as well as whether they have visited Bloemfontein or not. In this section, no distinction will be made between the response received in Cape Town, Johannesburg, and Durban, as it only reflects the profile of the tour operators in general.

The figures listed below, provide information on the following aspects:

- The job description.
- The age.
- Years experience.
- Visitors to Bloemfontein.
- Possible visitors to Bloemfontein.

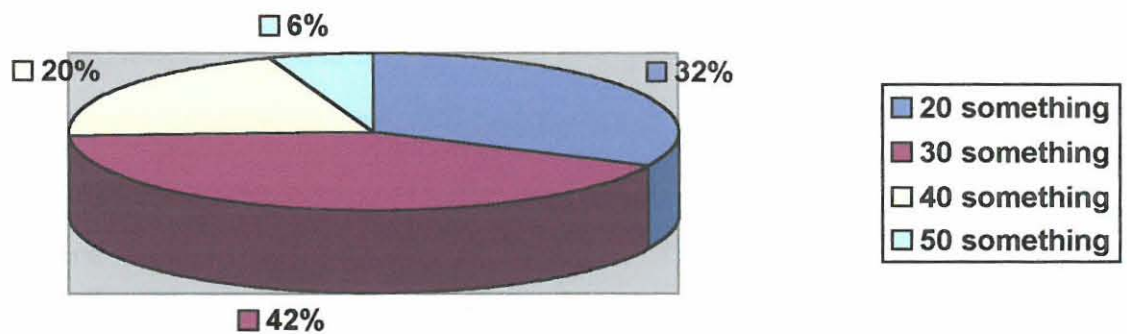
Figure 5.1. The job description





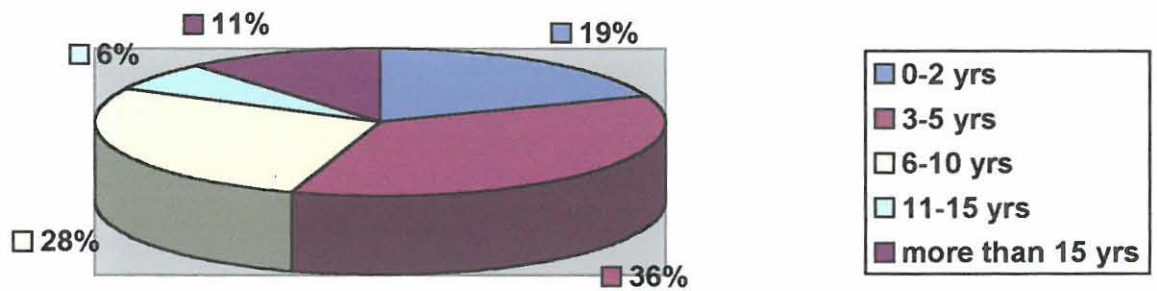
According to figure 5.1, it is clear that a wide spectrum of respondents within tour operations were targeted, with the majority of 30% that indicated that they were employed as sales consultants. Sales consultants are directly responsible for the selling of tours and packages to either members of the public or to travel agents. Operational managers at 19%, presidents or owners at 17%, and sales managers at 16%, indicate an equal distribution amongst these job descriptions, with general managers (11%) and marketing managers (7%) in the minority.

**Figure 5.2. The age of the respondents**



The majority of respondents, 42%, according to Figure 5.2, are thirty something, while the second largest group is the twenty something group of 32%, which in total represents 74%. The remaining 20% is forty something, with only 6% of the respondents over 50. A reason for this tendency may be due to the fact that the tourism industry in South Africa is a relatively young industry. Similar results were found in research done by Snyman (2002:67).

**Figure 5.3. Years experience**



In Figure 5.3, it is illustrated that 36% of the respondents had between 3-5 years of experience in selling packages, and 28% had 6-10 years of tour operations' experience. Only 6% had between 0-2 years of experience, 11% had more than 15 years experience and 19% had between 11-15 years of experience. It is clear from this graph that there is no lack in experience, even though the respondents are dominantly of younger age groups. This may also indicate that respondents started working at a young age in the tourism industry.

**Figure 5.4. Visitors to Bloemfontein**

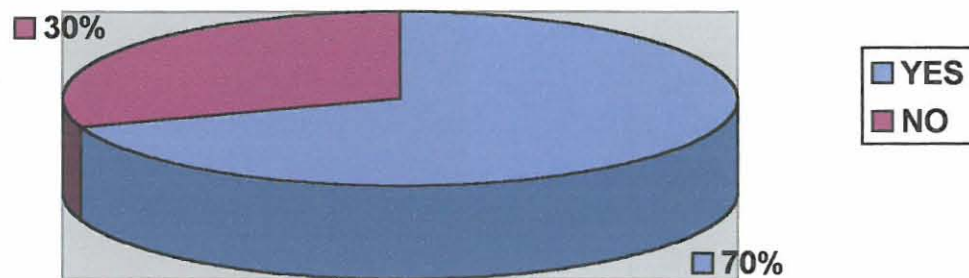


Figure 5.4 illustrates the number of respondents that have visited Bloemfontein before. The purpose of this question was to determine whether or not the answers given to the questions were based on perceptions formed after visiting Bloemfontein. 70% of the respondents have been to Bloemfontein before. It may thus be assumed that their answers were largely based on the experience and perceptions of the destination and the way in which they perceived it. It must be noted that other external factors could also have contributed to their perception and not the visit(s) only.

**Figure 5.5. Time span over which visits to Bloemfontein took place**

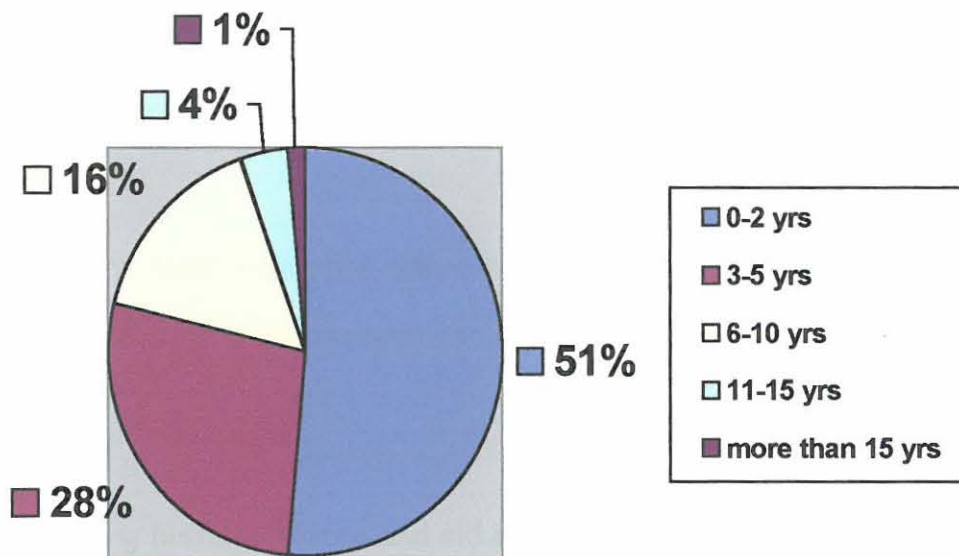


Figure 5.5 indicates that most of the visits (51%) were recent in the past two years, which may be an indication that the perceptions formed were recent ones. A further 28% of the visits were between 3-5 years ago, which concludes that a total of 79% of the visits were in the past 5 years.

The respondents were also asked if they would like to visit Bloemfontein or not. 47% of the respondents indicated that they would like to visit Bloemfontein and 53% indicated that they have no desire to visit Bloemfontein. This implies that of the 70% that have been to Bloemfontein before, only two-thirds would like to visit Bloemfontein again.

The main reasons listed for not wanting to visit Bloemfontein were the following (open ended questions were used):

- Nothing to do or see in Bloemfontein;



- Would rather go to the coast;
- No tourist attractions;
- Bloemfontein is old fashioned and for old people;
- Simply not interested.

The respondents that indicated that they would like to visit Bloemfontein, indicated the following reasons (open ended questions used again):

- Friendly people;
- Interesting historic places and old buildings;
- Ideal as a stop-over.

Knowing where the respondent information was obtained from, the study now focuses on the different markets that these respondents serve.

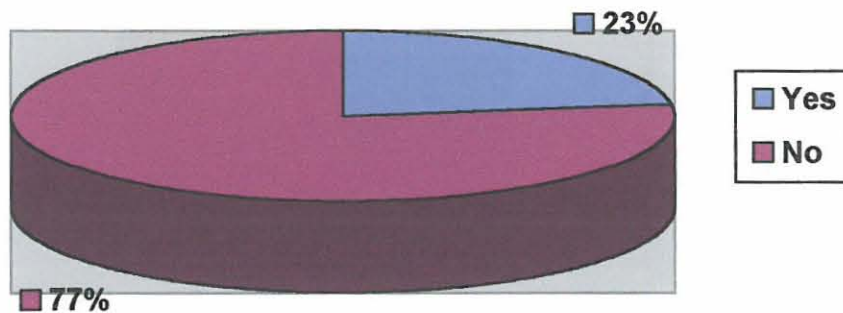
#### **5.2.2. The market of the tour operator**

The following information about the market that the tour operators serve, was obtained:

- Tour operators that sell packages or tours to Bloemfontein;
- Tour operators that sell packages or tours that pass through Bloemfontein;
- Tour operators that sell packages or tours that include accommodation within a 200-kilometre radius from Bloemfontein.

#### 5.2.2.1. Tour operators that sell packages or tours to Bloemfontein

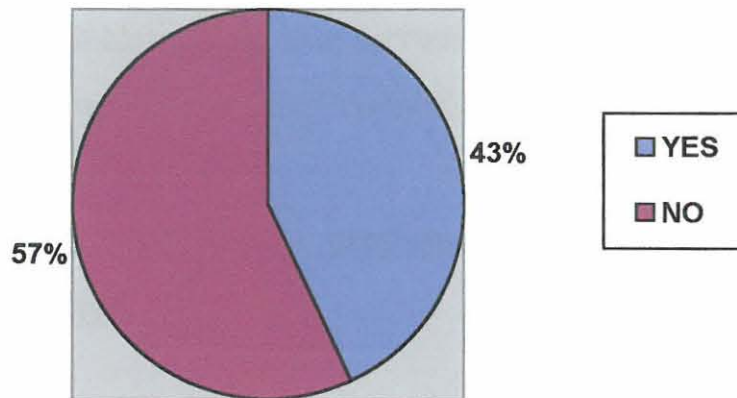
Figure 5.6. Tour operators that sell packages or tours to Bloemfontein



Dominantly, 77% of the tour operators indicated that they do not sell packages or tours to Bloemfontein. Only 23% sell packages or tours to Bloemfontein. The main reasons listed by the tour operators for not selling packages to Bloemfontein are the following:

- No demand for tours to Bloemfontein;
- Not a popular destination;
- Not part of the market of the respondent tour operator.

**Figure 5.7. Tour operators that sell packages or tours that pass through Bloemfontein**



As indicated in Figure 5.7, 43% of all the tour operators sell tours that pass through Bloemfontein. The challenge here should be to take at least the 43% that are already passing through Bloemfontein, and give them a reason for an overnight stay in Bloemfontein or even better, give them add-on packages to sell in Bloemfontein. Marketing efforts to initiate this process should be attempted by Mangaung Tourism.

Individually according to region, the tour operators in Cape Town dominantly do not sell tours that pass through Bloemfontein, with a 72% negative and 28% positive response. In Durban and Johannesburg, a more even split was indicated: 50% of the Durban tour operators sell tours or packages that pass through Bloemfontein, and 55% of the Johannesburg tour operators indicated that they sell tours or packages that pass through Bloemfontein.

This is an indication that more tour operators in Johannesburg and Durban sell packages that pass through Bloemfontein than the Cape Town tour operators. Only 9% of the tour operators in Cape Town sell tours that pass through

Bloemfontein. This could also be an indication that the Cape Town tour operators mainly sell tours in other areas that do not necessarily pass through Bloemfontein, but the Johannesburg and Durban tour operators sell tours from Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal and the surrounding areas, that pass through Bloemfontein on their way to the Cape Province.

**Figure 5.8. Packages that include accommodation within a 200-kilometre radius from Bloemfontein**

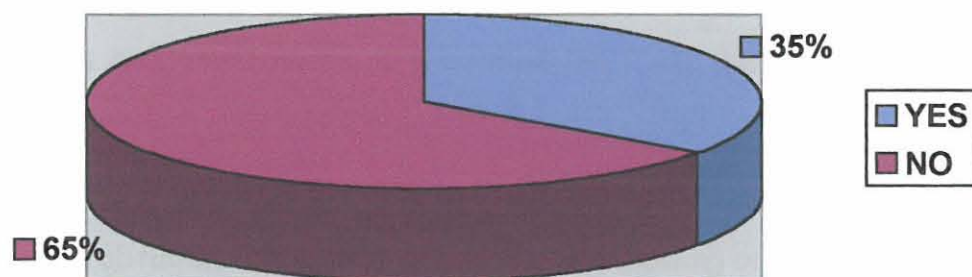


Figure 5.8 indicates that 35% of the tour operators overnight or use accommodation within a 200-kilometre range of Bloemfontein. It is evident from the 43% that already pass through Bloemfontein and the 35% that use accommodation on the outskirts of Bloemfontein, that there is a possible market that needs to be researched and exploited by the marketers of Bloemfontein.

With regards to this figure, 45% of the Johannesburg tour operators indicated that they sell tours that pass within a 200km radius from Bloemfontein, followed by Durban (25%) and Cape Town (24%). This confirms the previous



conclusion that more tour operators operate from Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal via Bloemfontein to the Western Cape.

The next step in the research process is to research the perception that tour operators have about Bloemfontein as a destination in general, and whether or not the respondents perceive it as a destination with potential for packages and tours.

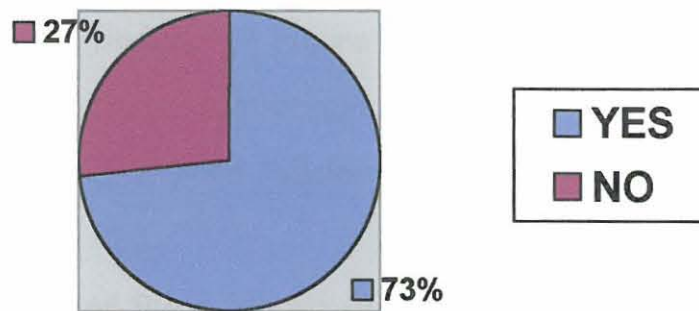
### 5.3. The perception of Bloemfontein

The research questionnaire was aimed at obtaining information of perceptions of the respondents on Bloemfontein as a destination from the viewpoint of a tour operator.

The information obtained will be discussed in the following order:

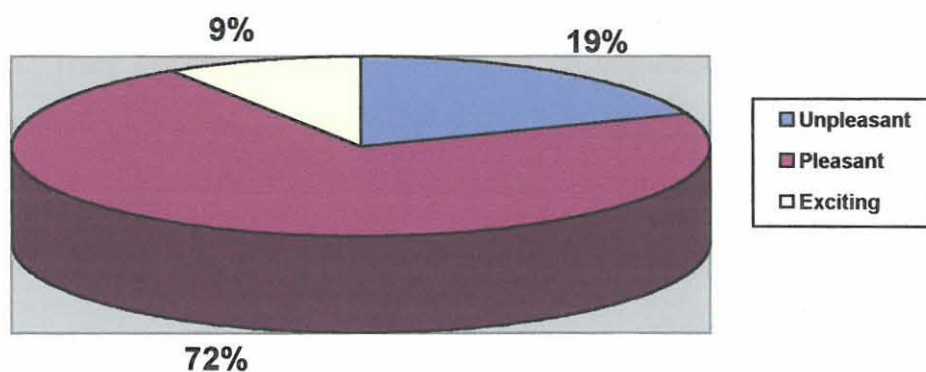
- Potential of Bloemfontein for overnight packages.
- Perception of Bloemfontein as a stop-over destination.
- Perception of Bloemfontein as a destination.
- Perception of Bloemfontein based on specific criteria.

**Figure 5.9. Potential for overnight packages**



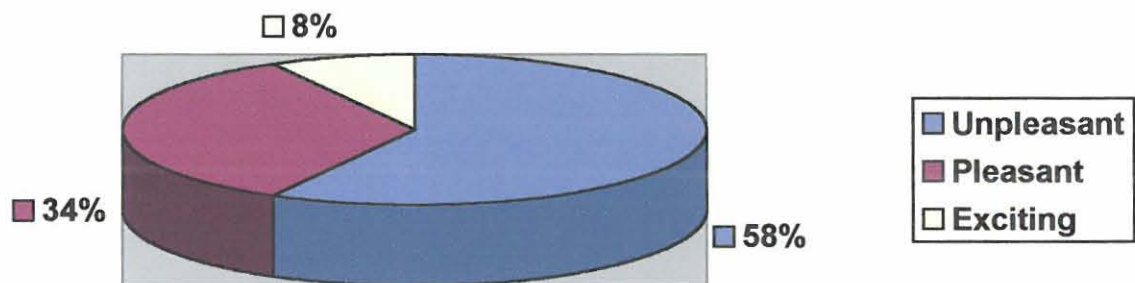
In Figure 5.9 it is indicated that 73% of the respondents think that Bloemfontein has potential for overnight accommodation stays. This information correlates with the results of Figure 5.10 further below. The majority of tour operators in Durban (88%), Johannesburg (77%) and Cape Town (70%) agreed that Bloemfontein has potential for overnight packages.

**Figure 5.10. Perception of Bloemfontein as a stop-over destination**



Furthermore, in Figure 5.10 respondents had to indicate their opinion of Bloemfontein as a stop-over destination in three categories: unpleasant, pleasant and exciting. 72% indicated that Bloemfontein is a pleasant stop-over, which once again confirms the findings of Figure 5.8. All the tour operators in the different regions agreed that Bloemfontein is a pleasant stop-over destination: Durban (88%), Cape Town (80%) and Johannesburg (62%).

**Figure 5.11. Perception of Bloemfontein as a tourist destination**



In Figure 5.11 it is indicated that only 8% of all the respondents rated Bloemfontein as an exciting tourist destination. 58% of the respondents indicated that they perceived Bloemfontein as an unpleasant destination, while 34% regarded it as a pleasant destination. If Figures 5.10 and 5.11 are compared, it is clear that the respondents in all three cities favoured Bloemfontein as a stop-over rather than a tourist destination.

Figure 5.12. Perception of Bloemfontein based

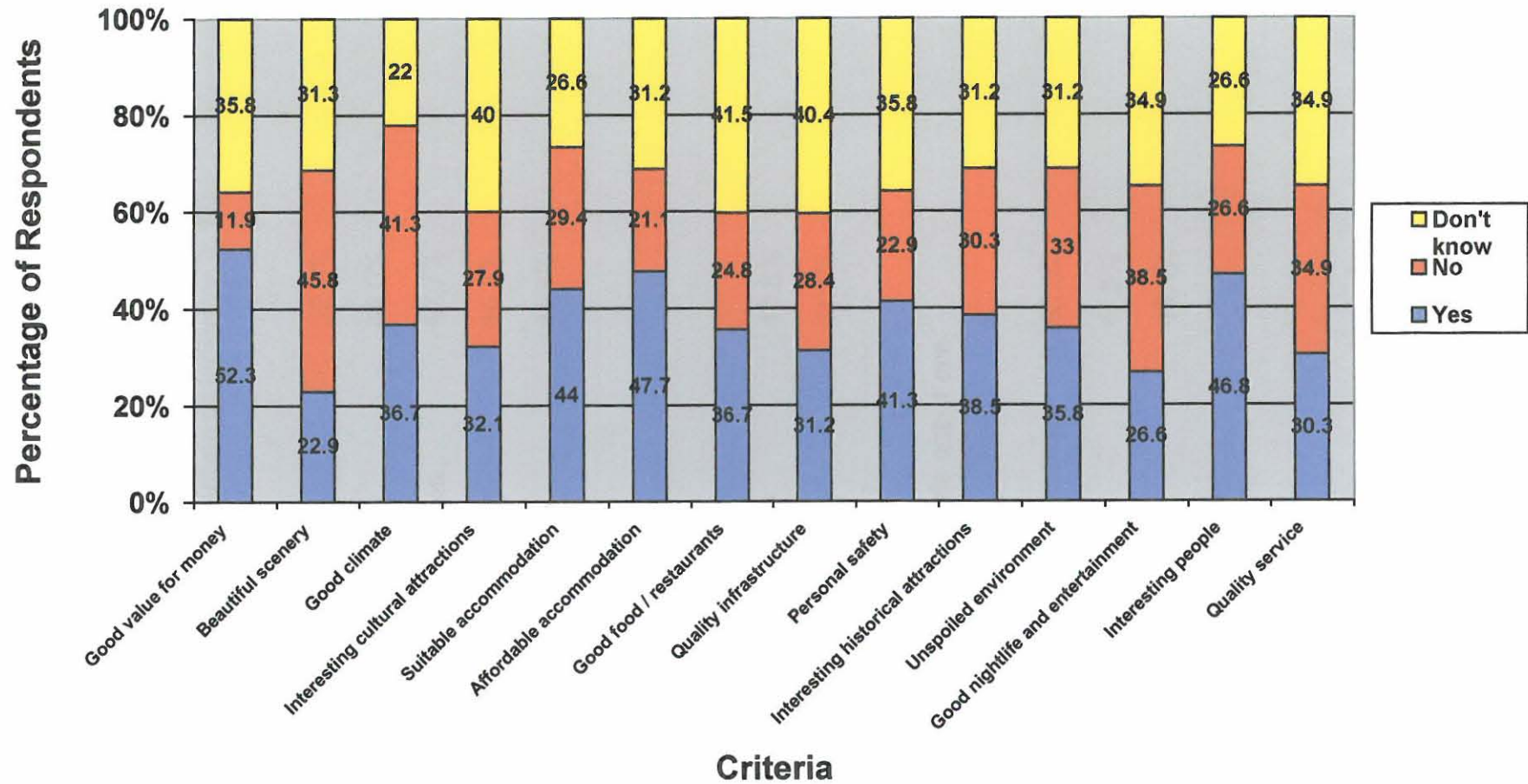




Figure 5.12 indicates the response to a question that tested the perception of the respondents with regards to specific criteria of Bloemfontein as listed in the figure.

The **positive** aspects of Bloemfontein as indicated in their response are:

- Good value for money 52.3%
- Suitable accommodation 44.0%
- Affordable accommodation 47.7%
- Interesting and friendly people 46.8%
- Personal safety 41.3%

The **negative** aspects indicated are:

- Lack of beautiful scenery 45.8%
- Lack of good climate 41.3%

The aspects that they **know little** about are:

- Interesting cultural attractions 40.0%
- Good food restaurants 41.5%
- Quality infrastructure 40.4%

The aspects that they were **neutral** about:

- Historical attractions
- Unspoilt environment
- Good nightlife and entertainment.

**Figure 5.13. Overall perception of Bloemfontein for tour operators in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town**

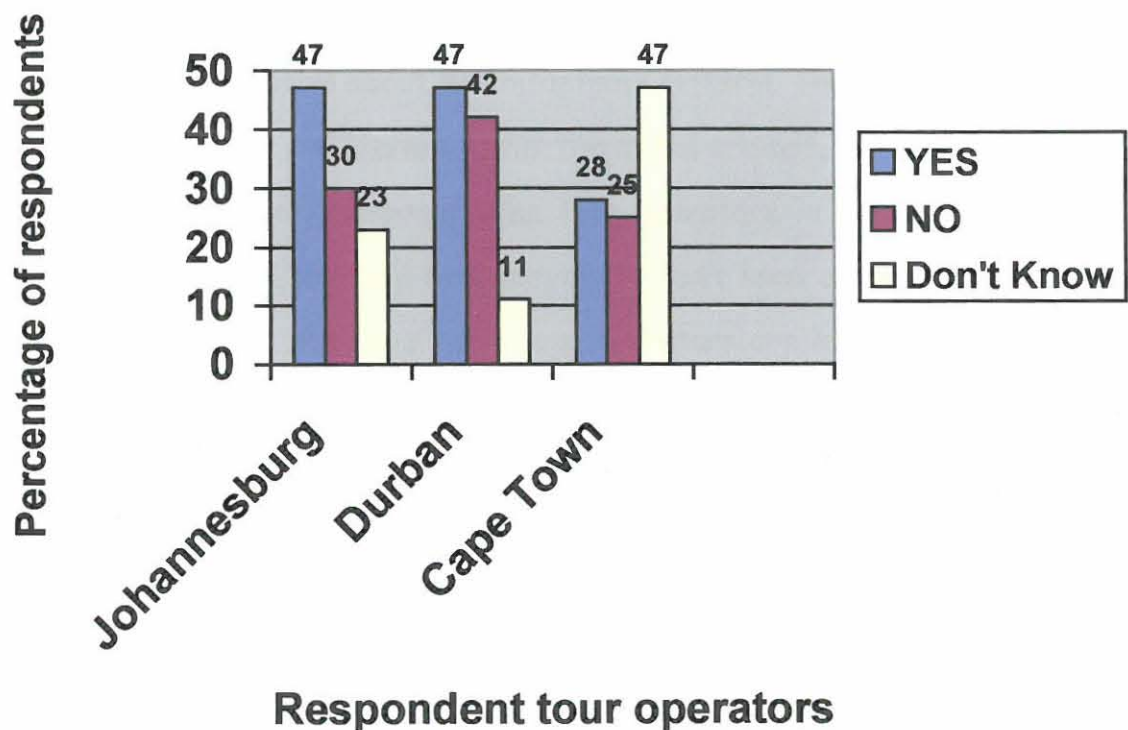


Figure 5.13 aims to illustrate how positive, negative, or uninformed, the different tour operators in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town are with

regards to the criteria tested in Figure 5.12. The respondents had to indicate whether or not they felt that Bloemfontein offered these different criteria<sup>6</sup>.

The values used in Figure 5.13 were obtained from the questions answered with regards to Figure 5.12 testing different criteria of Bloemfontein as a destination. Figure 5.13 indicates the percentage of yes, no, and don't know answers based in general on all the criteria combined. This figure indicates that the Johannesburg and Durban respondents were more positive, the listed criteria indicating that their general perception of Bloemfontein was better than that of the tour operators in Cape Town where only 28% of the respondents were positive about Bloemfontein's criteria. The tour operators in Cape Town were more indifferent about the listed criteria, with 47% of them indicating a 'don't know' response. The tour operators in Johannesburg and Durban only have 23% and 11% respectively of don't know answers. This could be an indication that the Cape Town tour operators are less informed about Bloemfontein as a tourist destination than those in Johannesburg and Durban.

Before any final conclusions can be made, the general knowledge of the respondents must be tested to find out how much the respondents know about Bloemfontein, as this knowledge is what they base their answers and perceptions upon.

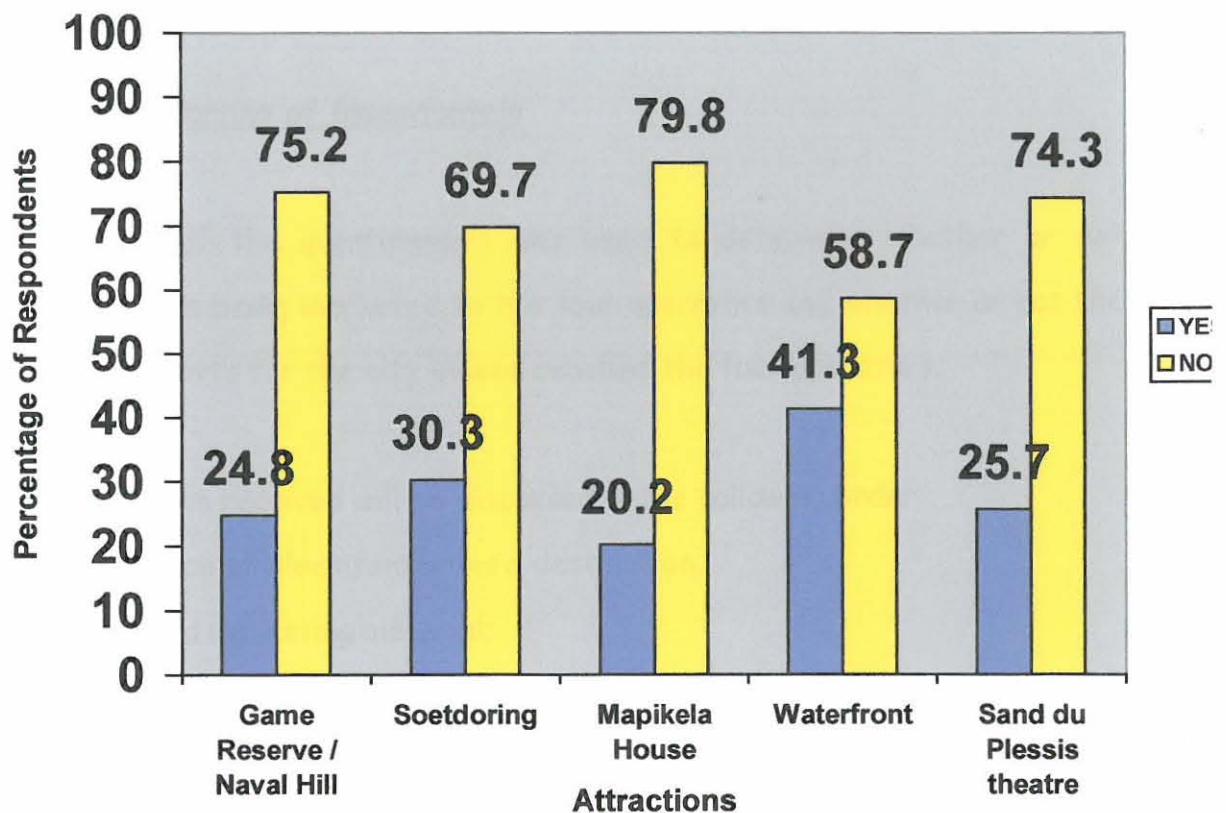
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<sup>6</sup> Criteria: Good value for money, beautiful scenery, good climate, interesting cultural attractions, suitable accommodation, affordable accommodation, good food / restaurants, quality infrastructure,

#### 5.4. General knowledge of Bloemfontein

This section of the research questionnaire tested the knowledge amongst tour operators in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban on Bloemfontein in terms of well-known and other attractions.

Figure 5.14. Knowledge of attractions of Bloemfontein



personal safety, interesting historical attractions, unspoiled environment, good nightlife and entertainment, interesting people and quality service.



According to Figure 5.14, not one of the attractions used in the questionnaire received a higher positive acknowledgement than 41.3% (Waterfront). Mapikela House, a cultural attraction related to the roots of the ANC, was least known and received a 20.2% acknowledgement by the respondents. Naval Hill and the Sand du Plessis theatre each received 24.8% and 25.7% respectively, whilst Soetdoring Nature Reserve was recognised by 30.3% of the respondents. This figure clearly indicates that the respondents are not nearby fully aware of what Bloemfontein has to offer.

### 5.5. The marketing of Bloemfontein

This section of the questionnaire was used to determine whether or not Bloemfontein is being marketed to the tour operators and whether or not the marketing efforts for the city indeed reached the tour operators.

The information received will be discussed in the following order:

- Promotion of Bloemfontein as a destination;
- Received marketing material;
- Awareness of marketing activities of Bloemfontein.

**Figure 5.15. Marketing of Bloemfontein**

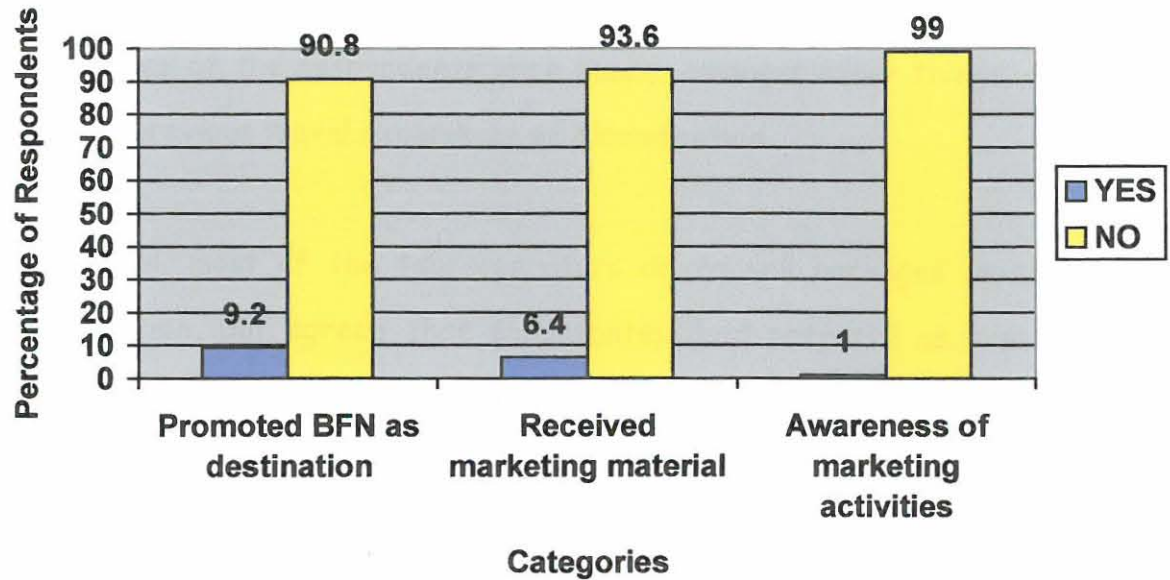


Figure 5.15 illustrates that 91% of the respondents indicated that no one has ever promoted Bloemfontein as a destination to them. 94% of the respondents indicated that they have never received any marketing material on Bloemfontein, and an astonishing 99% of the respondents indicated that they are not aware of any marketing activities to promote Bloemfontein. The city of Bloemfontein, with all its assets, should be marketed by Mangaung Tourism to especially tour operators as they are stimulators of tourism products.

## **5.6. Conclusion**

The respondents that answered the questionnaires were all tour operators that sold packages or tours to different destinations in South Africa. The

majority of them (70%) have visited Bloemfontein before of which 79% of the visits took place during the past 5 years. It may thus be concluded that the perceptions of the respondents were based, amongst other things, on their (recent) previous travel experience of Bloemfontein.

In general, most of the tour operators do not sell packages or tours to Bloemfontein, but agreed that Bloemfontein had potential as a stop-over destination. The respondents were also not well informed about the attractions and facilities offered in Bloemfontein. Furthermore, the tour operators indicated that Bloemfontein was not marketed to them.

## CHAPTER 6

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to conclude and make recommendations with regard to:

- The literature study;
- The empirical research;
- Further research.

### 6.2. CONCLUSIONS

#### 6.2.1. Literature study

- A tourist is someone whom undertakes a journey:
  - Away from home and their usual habitat;
  - Participates in activities at the destination;
  - Has the intention to return home;
  - Consume products and services at the destination.



- Tourists seek the experience of novelty and strangeness, but shrinks back when the experience becomes too strange. Most tourists need something familiar that reminds them of home.
- Tourist attractions at a destination must be strong enough to pull the tourist away from home.
- Tour operators stimulate the tourism industry by the putting together and selling of tours and packages to different destinations. These packages include some of or all of the following elements: transportation, accommodation, meals, attractions and tourism services.
- Tourist behaviour is multi-motivational and the decision to take a holiday stems from individual needs, desires and preferences.
- At personal level, no two individuals are alike and differences in attitude, perceptions, image and motivation have an important influence on travel decisions.
- There is no vast difference in the motivation to travel between males and females.
- If the real reason for taking a holiday is to relax and unwind, then the apparent reasons for taking a holiday may be concerned with prestige and status.

- Perception is based on an individual's perception of reality and not on reality itself.
- Perceptions are formed when individuals select, organise and integrate stimuli and if conflicting stimuli are received simultaneously which leads to distortion, the unwelcome stimuli will be ignored to protect the individual.
- Every individual interprets information differently based on each person's frame of reference.
- Using learning ability to teach a consumer the attributes of a product is better than trusting the consumer to rely on instinctive behaviour.
- Attitude is a learned experience, which implies that the consumer is not born with an attitude towards a product, but it is formed through the learning process.
- Attitudes are relatively consistent and do not change on a regular basis, but it does not imply that attitude cannot be changed at all.
- Marketers may change attitude by influencing any of the following components: knowledge, evaluation and predisposition to act.

- Destination characteristics alone cannot account for one destination's preference over another, but personality traits can.
- Personality and life-style traits are a dominant force in determining consumer behaviour.
- Each individual member of a family has an influence on behaviour patterns and each member plays a different role in the process- being it to gather information or as the decision maker.
- When considering different destinations, tourists rely heavily on the image of a particular destination.
- If the image of a destination coincide with the tourists' preferences and expectations, the destination will be given a favourable rating.
- An individual's perception of a holiday destination is conditioned by the information available at the time of decision-making.
- The tourist's choice of destination reflects the appeal to the individual of its attractions over those offered by other destinations.
- If a product is not what the market wants, then no price adjustment, dependable delivery or brilliant promotion will encourage consumers to buy it.

- Every destination has a unique mix of characteristics, which are determined by various factors such as its geographical location, culture, developments, history and attractions.
- External factors such as politics, seasons, competition, tastes and technology have an influence on the destination but are beyond the control of the destination.
- When choosing a destination, the following considerations are taken into account by the tourist:
  - Awareness: the tourist already has travel destinations in his/her awareness set;
  - Internal input: the individual's own motives, values and attitudes act as a filter among the destinations in the awareness set;
  - External input: external information on the destination is gathered.
- The image of a tourist destination is a personal composite view of each individual and not necessarily the same for each individual.
- An image is formed on the basis of past holiday experiences, hearsay, information from other people, the media or travel agents.



- The dominant attributes that people use to sort mental images of the destination are often related to cost, climate, scenery, personal safety and sanitation.
- No two individuals will have an identical image of a destination because the information signals they receive is subject to mental processing.
- An image of a destination is formed after the individual receives information through his/her senses and through mental processing. A perception of a destination is a personal feeling which may be subjective or not, but is based on an impression or belief.

#### 6.2.2. Empirical research

- 30% of the respondents were sales consultants.
- 42% of the respondents were 30 something.
- The level of work experience of the respondents was the highest in the 3-5 years category with 36%.
- 70% of the respondents have visited Bloemfontein before.
- 51% of the respondents have visited Bloemfontein in the past two years.

- 67% of the respondents that have visited Bloemfontein before would like to visit it again.
- Only 23% of the tour operators sell packages or tours to Bloemfontein, but 43% of the tour operators sell packages or tours that pass through Bloemfontein.
- 72% of the tour operators in Cape Town do not sell packages or tours to Bloemfontein.
- 50% of the Durban tour operators do not sell packages or tours to Bloemfontein.
- 45% of the tour operators in Johannesburg do not sell packages or tours to Bloemfontein.
- 35% of all the tour operators overnight or use accommodation within a 200-kilometre range of Bloemfontein.
- 73% of all the respondents agreed that Bloemfontein has potential for overnight packages.
- 58% of the respondents felt that Bloemfontein was unpleasant as a tourist destination.

- 52% of the respondents indicated that Bloemfontein offered good value for money.
- 23% of the respondents felt that Bloemfontein offered beautiful scenery.
- 37% of all the respondents agreed that Bloemfontein had a good climate.
- 40% of the respondents did not know much about the cultural attractions offered in Bloemfontein.
- 44% of all the tour operators agreed that Bloemfontein had suitable accommodation.
- 48% of all the tour operators indicated that Bloemfontein had affordable accommodation.
- 41% of the respondents did not know much about the restaurants in Bloemfontein.
- 40% of the respondents indicated that they do not know much about the infrastructure of Bloemfontein.

- 41% of the tour operators agreed that Bloemfontein offered personal safety.
- 39% of the respondents confirmed that Bloemfontein had interesting historical attractions.
- 36% of the respondents agreed that Bloemfontein offered an unspoilt environment.
- 39% of all the tour operators indicated that Bloemfontein did not offer good nightlife and entertainment.
- 47% of the tour operators found Bloemfontein's people friendly and interesting.
- 30% of the tour operators felt that Bloemfontein offered good quality service.
- 47% of the tour operators in Cape Town did not know much about Bloemfontein in general.
- 23% of the tour operators in Johannesburg did not know much about Bloemfontein in general.



- 11% of the tour operators in Durban did not know much about Bloemfontein in general.
- 47% of the tour operators in Johannesburg and Durban individually indicated that they felt positive about the different criteria<sup>7</sup> of Bloemfontein.
- 28% of the tour operators in Cape Town indicated a positive response about the criteria of Bloemfontein.
- The knowledge of all tour operators about the attractions of Bloemfontein were very low:
  - 25% knew of the existence of Naval Hill and the nature reserve;
  - 30% indicated that they know about Soetdoring Nature Reserve;
  - 20% have heard about or visited Mapikela House;
  - 41% knew about the existence of the Waterfront;
  - 26% knew about the Sand du Plessis theatre.
- 9% of all the respondent tour operators indicated that Bloemfontein has been promoted to them as a tourist destination.

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<sup>7</sup> Criteria: Good value for money, beautiful scenery, good climate, interesting cultural attractions, suitable accommodation, affordable accommodation, good food / restaurants, quality infrastructure, personal safety, interesting historical attractions, unspoiled environment, good nightlife and entertainment, interesting people and quality service.

- 6% of all the respondent tour operators indicated that they have received marketing material on Bloemfontein in the past.
- 1% of all the tour operators agreed that they are aware of marketing activities to promote Bloemfontein as a destination.

### 6.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations of this research will be organised in the following fashion:

- The market of the tour operator.
- The perception of Bloemfontein.
- General knowledge of Bloemfontein.

#### 6.3.1. The market of the tour operator

The research concludes that the majority (77%) tour operators do not sell packages or tours to Bloemfontein. This implies that the tour operators do not use Bloemfontein as a final tourist destination, but it could be included in other tours and packages.

There is however an existing market of 43% of the tour operators that sells packages or tours that pass through Bloemfontein. There is also another

market: 35% of the tour operators sell tours or packages that include accommodation within a 200-kilometre radius from Bloemfontein.

The following recommendations are made to stimulate the sale of tours and packages of Bloemfontein:

- Existing tours and packages should be marketed to tour operators in order for them to sell these tours and packages either individually to interested parties or to include it in a constructed tour that pass through Bloemfontein. This process should be initiated by Mangaung Tourism and supported by all the roleplayers.
- Individual products and events should be marketed aggressively to tour operators to create an awareness of what is happening in Bloemfontein so that they can include these products and events in their packages or recommend it to the individual tourist. For example: the festivals<sup>8</sup>, markets and other events are existing products that could be used to enhance the itinerary of the tour operator.
- Marketers should attempt to prolong the visits to Bloemfontein to such an extent that they turn visits to Bloemfontein into overnight stays or longer. For example: sundowners or cocktails and a theatre show the evening or an adventure day trip with a bush-braai the evening.

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<sup>8</sup> See Annexure C for full details.

- The marketing efforts amongst tour operators should be focused on tour operators in Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal, as most of these operators offer existing tours or -packages that pass through Bloemfontein. Only 9% of the tour operators in Cape Town sell packages or tours that pass through Bloemfontein. The Cape Town tour operators should not be excluded, but could be targeted as a second phase.
- The tour operators (35%) that already use accommodation in surrounding towns should rather be motivated to use Bloemfontein as an option as well. Bloemfontein offers 79 guesthouses and/or bed & breakfast accommodation establishments, 8 backpackers and 24 hotels and/or lodges that provide different types of accommodation (Mangaung Tourism, 2004). The advantages of the product (Bloemfontein) should be communicated to the tour operators. The tour operators already indicated that most of them found the accommodation in Bloemfontein suitable and affordable. If the accommodation is acceptable, then the attractions, events and facilities in Bloemfontein should be used to pull these tour operators to Bloemfontein.
- 43% of the tour operators pass through Bloemfontein. Marketers should focus on making tour operators aware of interesting restaurants to have a meal, a quick stop to look at something or to visit an attraction. This could be used to enhance a lunch break or a petrol stop. Even if the programme of the tour operator does not allow for another



over-night stop, then the opportunity could still be used to expose Bloemfontein to the tourists for later visits.

### 6.3.2. The perception of Bloemfontein

#### 6.3.2.1. The perception of Bloemfontein as a destination

It is a very difficult task to change the perception that exists in the mind of any individual, as these perceptions are not always based on reality. The perceptions exist amongst tour operators that Bloemfontein is unpleasant (58%) as a tourist destination, but pleasant (72%) as a stop-over destination. 73% indicated that Bloemfontein had potential for stop-over packages. The following recommendations are made:

- Bloemfontein should be marketed amongst tour operators as a central, exciting stop-over destination en route to other regions.
- Special stop-over packages and deals could be negotiated with Bloemfontein product owners to promote to the tour operators. These packages could include more than accommodation options, but should also include other elements of the destination, for example a stop-over package that includes accommodation and a performance at the Sand du Plessis theatre, or accommodation with a visit to a local crocodile farm /

lion camp. The tour operator could also sell these packages to independent tourists.

- Marketers could also attempt, as a second phase project once the stop-over market has been established, to change the perception that exists amongst tour operators that Bloemfontein is an unpleasant tourist destination by changing the existing tourist image of Bloemfontein. As it is difficult to change an image that exists in the minds of the consumers, different media must be used to create an image of Bloemfontein that is striking, up-to-date and visually powerful. An appropriate slogan, used repetitively, can also be used to enhance the city's image.

#### 6.3.2.2. The perception of Bloemfontein based on specific criteria

##### 6.3.2.2.1. The positive aspects

The positive criteria indicated by the tour operators were: good value for money, suitable and affordable accommodation, interesting and friendly people and personal safety. These criteria could be used to:

- Enhance the perception that Bloemfontein offers suitable and affordable accommodation, which could benefit the tour operator financially, but also provides good value for money.

- Emphasize the existing perception that Bloemfontein offers a safe personal environment to tourists.

#### 6.3.2.2.2. The negative aspects

Tour operators perceived that they found Bloemfontein to lack beautiful scenery and a good climate. The following recommendations are made:

- As the natural environment cannot be changed; the tourism marketers and developers should focus on creating other stimulating scenery such as: man made attractions and developments; the visibility and appeal of the city from the national highways; the cleanness of the CBD and other tourist areas.

B.Tech Tourism Management students at the Technikon Free State (2003) did research (unpublished report) on tourism development needs in Bloemfontein. They determined the needs amongst different demographic groups<sup>9</sup> of the general public of Bloemfontein. The following developments were identified to be the five most wanted attractions:

- Ice Skating Rink and roller blade course;

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<sup>9</sup> Demographic groups researched: students, inhabitants of Lourier Park, scholars, inhabitants of Langenhoven Park and senior citizens.

- Waterworld with slides, wave house and swimming area with man-made waves;
- Theme Park with various fun rides and entertainment activities;
- 10 Pin Bowling Alley;
- Entertainment Centre with Imax theatre and video games.

Tourism developers and marketers should take note of these research outcomes and take it into consideration for future developments in Bloemfontein.

- The climate can also not be regulated by marketers, but well air-conditioned accommodation facilities, shopping malls and indoor recreation centres and pools could definitely be used as a marketing tool.

#### 6.3.2.2.3. The uninformed aspects

Listed as aspects that the tour operators knew little about was interesting cultural attractions, good food restaurants and quality infrastructure even though these are existing products of Bloemfontein. The following recommendations are suggested:

- Bloemfontein offers approximately 77 restaurants and 27 coffee shops (Mangaung Tourism, 2004) and this should be communicated to the market. Focus should also be drawn to the wide variety of



restaurants offered, from formal restaurants with French cuisine, traditional restaurants, to a variety of fast food, franchise and privately owned restaurants.

- Cultural attractions are very sought after and the variety that Bloemfontein has to offer the tour operators should be made general knowledge to them by repetition of the message. Examples of these are: existing township tours, the Sand du Plessis theatre and shebeens.
- The infrastructure of Bloemfontein, such as gymnasiums, golf courses, shopping centres, sports fields and theatres should be brought to the attention of the tour operators so that they are completely aware of what Bloemfontein has to offer.

#### 6.3.2.2.4. The neutral aspects

The tour operators were equally positive, negative and uninformed about the historical attractions, the unspoilt environment and the nightlife and entertainment of Bloemfontein. The following recommendations are made to market these aspects:

- Market the unique historical attractions to tour operators by means of an interesting brochure and make suggestions of guided two-hour tours

of various attractions that could be used during a stop-over or a stop in Bloemfontein.

- Compile a monthly entertainment calendar of Bloemfontein that can be mailed, faxed or emailed to tour operators on a monthly basis, which include theatre shows, live performances, outdoor entertainment and other nightlife activities.

#### 6.3.3. The general knowledge of Bloemfontein

All the tour operators were very badly informed about Bloemfontein attractions and few of them (between 20% - 40%) knew about the existence of some of Bloemfontein's attractions. The following recommendations are made:

- Promote Bloemfontein's attractions by means of a visually appealing video or CD that can be distributed amongst tour operators.
- Use quarterly workshops to invite different tour operators to educational of Bloemfontein. Tour operators will sell products that they are familiar with.
- Advertise and publish articles on Bloemfontein in industry related magazines and newsletters on a frequent basis.

- Initiate an interactive website specifically for tour operators, providing support services such as tour guides, transport, accommodation, bookings and related services.
- Link the website to local and international tourism search engines.
- Use major sports and special events as an opportunity to publicise Bloemfontein and what it offers.

#### 6.4. SUMMARY

To summarise the study by taking the research results into consideration, it is clear that the existing tourist image of Bloemfontein may not necessarily be as favourable as it should be. It has to be kept in mind that perception and image is often based on historical and past experiences, rather than current ones. It is thus very important that the CURRENT images of Bloemfontein should be marketed to the world outside to change the rather old fashioned image that exists presently. It is also very important that the new message must be directed to all the important role players and market segments specifically, but also to the public in general.

The marketing message used must be powerful and strong enough to change and enhance the image of Bloemfontein as a destination with various possibilities and attributes that could be used by consumers to satisfy various

needs for instance a stop-over destination, a conference centre and a break away from the city. It is very important that industry as well as the general public should be able to relate to the message and the image created. The aim of the message should also have educational value in order to bring across the message that Bloemfontein has new and existing attractions and developments to suite various tourist needs. The industry and the general public should know what is going on in Bloemfontein and exactly what it has to offer.



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## ANNEXURE A

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## Questionnaire

The tourism image of Bloemfontein as perceived by tour operators in certain metropolitan areas of South Africa.



**1. What is your job description?**

- President/Owner ☐
- General Manager ☐
- Operational Manager ☐
- Sales Manager ☐
- Marketing Manager ☐
- Other ☐
- Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. What age are you?**

- 20 something ☐
- 30 something ☐
- 40 something ☐
- 50 something ☐
- 60 something ☐

**3. Do you sell packages or tours to different destinations?**

Yes/No

**4. If yes, how long have you sold packages or tours?**

- 0-2 years ☐
- 3-5 years ☐
- 6-10 years ☐
- 11-15 years ☐
- more than 15 years ☐

**5. Do you sell packages or tours to Bloemfontein?**

Yes / No

**5.1. If not, please specify a reason:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Do you sell packages or tours that pass through Bloemfontein?**

Yes / No

**7. Do any of your packages include accommodation within a 200km radius from Bloemfontein?**

Yes / No

**8. Do you think Bloemfontein has potential for packages or overnight accommodation stays?**

Yes / No

8.1. Please motivate your answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Have you ever been to Bloemfontein?

Yes / No

9.1. If yes, how long ago?

- |                    |                          |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 0-2 years          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3-5 years          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6-10 years         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11-15 years        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| more than 15 years | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10. Would you like to visit Bloemfontein?

Yes / No

10.1. Please motivate your answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### WHAT DO YOU THINK OF BLOEMFONTEIN?

1. As a tourist destination?

- |            |                          |
|------------|--------------------------|
| Unpleasant | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pleasant   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Exciting   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

1.1. Motivate your answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. As a stop-over / en-route destination?

- |            |                          |
|------------|--------------------------|
| Unpleasant | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pleasant   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Exciting   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2.1. Motivate your answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you think Bloemfontein has / offers.....

	Yes	No	Don't know
Good value for money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beautiful scenery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good climate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interesting cultural attractions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Suitable accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Affordable accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good food / restaurants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interesting historical attractions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unspoiled environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good nightlife and entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interesting and friendly people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. What would you list as the most positive aspect of Bloemfontein as a tourist destination?(One item only)

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4.1. Please motivate your answer: \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What would you list as the most negative aspect of Bloemfontein as a tourist destination? (One item only)

---

5.1. Please motivate your answer: \_\_\_\_\_

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DID YOU KNOW THAT BLOEMFONTEIN.....?

1. Offers one of the only two game reserves in the middle of a city in the world? Yes / No
2. Offers a nature reserve 30 kilometers out of Bloemfontein with a lion camp where feeding of lions can be experienced? Yes / No
3. Houses Mapikela House where a founder member of the ANC lived in the early 1900's? Yes / No
4. Has a waterfront? Yes / No
5. Has a theatre which is one of the most modern in the world and enjoys the highest usage of all the theatres in the country? Yes / No
6. Describe Bloemfontein by using the first three words that come to your mind.

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MARKETING

1. Has anyone ever promoted Bloemfontein as a destination to you? Yes / No
2. Have you ever received any marketing material on Bloemfontein? Yes / No
3. Are you aware of any marketing activities to promote Bloemfontein? Yes / No

3.1. If yes, please specify.

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## ANNEXURE B

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## Most important places of interest in Bloemfontein<sup>10</sup>

- Appeal Court

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court built in 1929.

- Anglican Cathedral

Offers Victorian architecture with stained glass windows.

- Bloemfontein Zoo

Sanctuary is provided here in pleasant surroundings for the "Big Five" as well as a variety of other animals and birds.

- Boyden Observatory

Bloemfontein is internationally recognized as a centre for astronomical observation.

- City Hall

A sandstone building with superb Italian marble and Burmese wood.

- Civic Centre

A modern glass building which serves as the head quarters of the city council.

- First Raadsaal

This humble one-roomed building built in 1893 is Bloemfontein's oldest surviving building.

- Fountain

A concrete column indicates the place of the original fountain from which the city derived its name.

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<sup>10</sup> Magaung Tourism (2004), SA-Venues (2004) and Southern African Places (2004).

- Franklin Nature Reserve

At the base of Naval hill, the reserve is home to many birds and indigenous game including springbok, giraffe and wildebeest.

- Free State National Botanical Gardens

These beautiful gardens is a popular venue for picnics and get-togethers.

- Freshford House Museum

This museum reflects the lifestyle of Bloemfontein's upper middle class in Edwardian times.

- Hamilton Park

The park incorporates an orchid house with waterfalls and pools. Nearby, a fragrance garden has been designed especially for the blind.

- King's Park Rose Garden

The garden contains over 4 000 rose bushes and is the venue for the arts and crafts market every first Saturday of the month.

- Lebohang Building

The massive glass stained window to the east consists of some 17 000 pieces of coloured glass.

- Loch Logan Waterfront

A family entertainment complex with a variety of restaurants, shops, cinemas, boat rides and a permanent flea market.

- Mapikela House

The home of one of the founders of the ANC, today it is a national monument.

- Methodist Church

Beautiful church with stained glass windows.

- National Afrikaans Literacy Museum and Research Centre

Houses a repository of works by prominent Afrikaans authors.

- National Museum

Notable for its large collections of fossils, cultural historical exhibits and archaeological displays.

- National Women's Memorial and War Museum of the Boer

A museum dedicated to the Boer forces that took part in the Anglo-Boer war. Also commemorating the women and children that died in the concentration camps.

- Naval Hill

Rising from the heart of the city, the summit of the hill offers panoramic views of Bloemfontein. Two British naval guns are mounted on the crest of the hill.

- Observatory Theatre

Built in 1925 as an observatory, but converted to a theatre and coffee shop used for plays and one man shows.

- Oliewenhuis Art Gallery

A Dutch manor house originally used by governor generals and state presidents.

- Old Presidency

A stately Victorian building that was the residence of three presidents of the old Republic of the Orange Free State.

- Queens Fort Military Museum

Military exhibition dating back to Anglo-Boer War

- Rugby Museum of Choet Visser

This museum is one of the largest private collections of its kind in the world.



- Sand Du Plessis Theatre

This is one of the most modern theatres in the world. The façade features massive glass panels and works of art form part of the décor.

- School of Armour

It offers a fine display of tanks and weaponry.

- State President Swart Park

The sports-orientated park encompasses the Free State Stadium and the surrounding recreational area with tennis courts, playgrounds and a heated swimming pool.

- Supreme Court Building

Built in 1909 at a cost of £60 000.

- Twin-spired Church

The only one of its kind in South Africa.

- White horse

This horse on Naval Hill was used as a landmark for horsemen coming in from the plains during the Anglo-Boer war.

## ANNEXURE C

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## List of events in Bloemfontein<sup>11</sup>

ABSA Athletics	Late February
Technikon Free State Food & Wine Festival	April
Bloem Show	End of April/May
Volksblad Kunstefees	Beginning of July
Motor Expo	Middle July
BloemWater Road Run	End of July
Macufe Festival	Middle October
Naval Hill Road Run	Middle of September
Homemakers Expo	End of September
New Covenant Ministries Conference	End of September
Rose Festival	3 <sup>rd</sup> week of October
Granaat Music Festival	October / November
OFM Cycle Classic	November
Arts & Crafts Market	Every 1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month
Wetdene Park Market	Every 2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month
Langenhoven Boeremark	Every Saturday
PACOFs performances	All year round
Golf Days	All year round
Oliewenhuis Art Exhibitions	All year round
Variety of sports events	All year round

<sup>11</sup> Magaung Tourism, 2004.